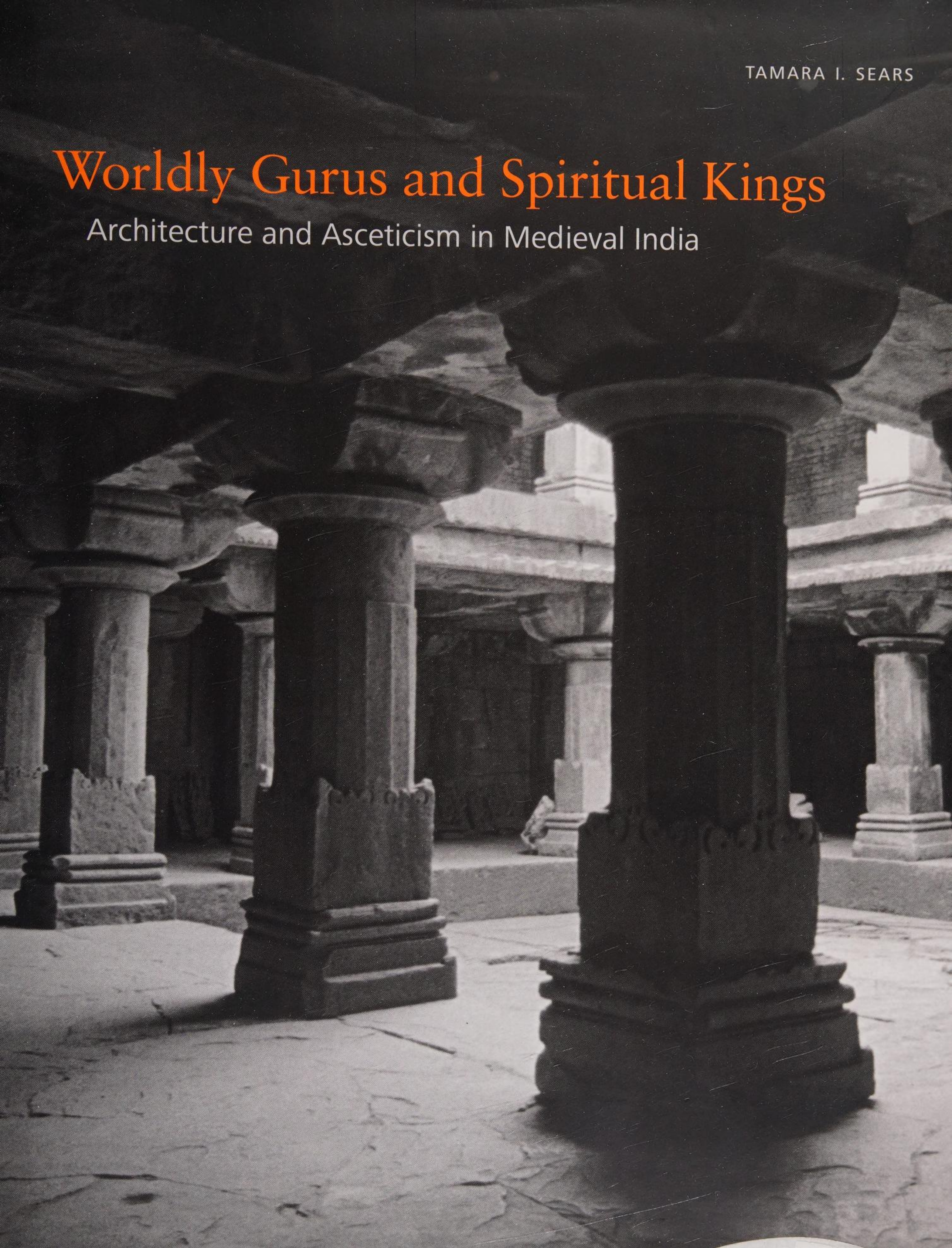
TAMARA I. SEARS

Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings

Architecture and Asceticism in Medieval India



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TAMARA I. SEARS

Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings

Architecture and Asceticism in Medieval India

This pioneering book is the first full-length study of the *matha*, or Hindu monastery, which developed in India at the turn of the first millennium. Rendered monumentally in stone, the matha represented more than just an architectural innovation: it signaled both the institutionalization of asceticism into a formalized monastic practice and the emergence of the guru as an influential public figure. With entirely new primary research, Tamara Sears examines the architectural and archaeological histories of six little-known monasteries in Central India and reveals the relationships between political power, religion, and the production of sacred space.

Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings features scrupulous original measured drawings and provides a vast amount of new material and a much-needed contribution to the fields of Asian art, religious studies, and cultural history. In introducing new categories of architecture, Sears illuminates the potential of buildings to reconfigure not only social and ritual relationships but also the fundamental ontology of the world.

Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings

Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings

ARCHITECTURE AND ASCETICISM IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

TAMARA I. SEARS

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS NEW HAVEN AND LONDON

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Pages ii–iii: Monastic site, Surwāyā (fig. 4.1)
Page v: Entrance, Temple I, Surwāyā (fig. 4.53)
Page vii: Figure addorsed to column, Surwāyā (fig. 4.56)

Jacket illustrations: (*front*) Courtyard on the ground floor, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā; (*back*) Room 11, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

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IN MEMORIAM

Lutka Sieraczek Korngold

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began many years ago, in the fall of 1998, through a set of a fateful convergences and thwarted plans. At the time, I was still a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania and taking a seminar on Indian temple architecture taught by Michael W. Meister. I had just returned from three months in Rajasthan, where I had been studying advanced Hindi through the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS). During that trip, I had the opportunity to travel to Menāl, where I had encountered a spectacular temple complex set near a gigantic gorge that served as the site of a magnificent waterfall. I was so struck by the temples and landscape, made all the more beautiful by the rains of the monsoon season, that I immediately thought it would be worth looking into as a possible topic for my seminar paper. When I consulted Michael, his response took me completely by surprise—he asked whether I had noticed the Hindu monastery standing among Menāl's temples.

That question, though seemingly simple, began an unexpectedly protracted journey. Not only had I missed the monastery at Menāl, but I had not known that such things existed. I had already spent a significant amount of time living and studying on the Indian subcontinent, but I had never come across references to Hindu monasteries in art historical sources. With growing enthusiasm, I began to dig in the university libraries. My journey into the topic, however, was short-lived because, as I quickly determined, the topic remained largely absent from the scholarly literature; just accessing the material at the most basic level would have required on-site fieldwork. When I eventually made it back to Menāl in the winters of 2001 and 2002, I was amazed to discover not one but two monasteries, built in the 1160s to support ascetics belonging to the prominent Pāśupata Śaiva religious order. In the process of documenting these buildings, it became clear why I had missed the monastery during my visit in 1998. The building itself was unremarkable from the exterior, and its significantly more impressive interior was inaccessible without written permission from the Archaeological Survey of India. The front door was secured with a massive padlock, in order to prevent entry by vandals and also, as I further inadvertently discovered, to protect visitors from the potential threat of snakes and scorpions that occasionally took residence inside.

As it turned out, my 1998 trip to Menāl was just a first step into a much wider and more promising range of sites, which I found by following the

inscriptional and archaeological trail of a lineage of Śaiva sages known in their time as the Drunken Peacocks (*Mattamayūras*). My journeys led me deep into the heart of rural Madhya Pradesh, again during the height of the monsoon. I arrived in Gwalior in August 1999 and hired a car and driver to take me to Shivpuri, which was to serve as the base of operations in my search for a monastery located a few hours away, at the village of Ranod. We set off early in the morning and made it without too much trouble to Ranod, which revealed itself to be a fully fortified town with a dense urban core and monumental gateways. We drove through the winding streets and through the fields and forests to finally find the monastery standing still intact in a clearing. Unfortunately, as is always the case during the monsoon, by the time we reached our destination, the rains had turned the road into a river, and the only path was through deep pools of mud. As I set off toward the site, desperately clinging to my camera, my discomfort quickly faded. There was an almost magical quality to the place, heightened perhaps by the profusion of greenery and fullness of the surrounding trees.

Over the course of the next two years, I returned repeatedly to document monastic sites during drier seasons, armed only with a camera, a portable drawing board, and a GPS. Because none of the monasteries had been properly published, the task of documentation was of primary concern. The measured drawings, maps, and photographs included among the following pages are the fruits of that labor, and they have provided the foundation for a broader analysis of a wide range of primary texts conducted over the course of many subsequent years. In the process of producing them, I discovered that the act of studying monuments from a distance as well as at such intimate proximity as their joints and hinges is a scholarly process of internalization, through which a building's meaning is not merely measured but bodily learned. After climbing onto rooftops to get better vantage points for photography and recruiting new friends in small villages to help me take measurements, I cannot help but think about how the meaning of a building is activated not only through its form but also through the agency of living communities.

In the same way, writing a book is never achieved without the intellectual, emotional, and financial support of many individuals. My deepest thanks go to Michael W. Meister at the University of Pennsylvania, whose rigorous approach to South Asian visual culture has taught me much over the years. At the University of Pennsylvania, Darielle Mason and Renata Holod not only provided crucial feedback at important moments but also demonstrated the value of combining detailed critical inquiry with breadth of thinking. I am also supremely grateful to Harunaga Isaacson, who generously lent his expertise and many hours in assisting me in my first reading of Sanskrit inscriptional materials; and to Phillip B. Wagoner at Wesleyan University, who introduced me to Indian art nearly two decades ago and who has continued to offer critical feedback over the years.

My research in India would never have been possible without the support of many individuals and institutions. I am particularly grateful to Fulbright-Hays and USIEF–India for providing funding and administrative services for field research

in India from 2000 to 2002, and to the J. Paul Getty Trust for a nonresidential postdoctoral fellowship in 2008 and 2009, which enabled me to significantly rethink and revise this project. The Archaeological Survey of India deserves special acknowledgment for generously granting me permissions to photograph and measure monuments in situ. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Gautam Sengupta for his assistance at the ASI headquarters in Delhi during his tenure as director general; to Mr. S. B. Ota, Mr. N. Taher, and Dr. Vyas in the main office in Bhopal; and to Dr. K. Lourdaswamy and Dr. M. C. Joshi of the North Indian Temple Survey Project. Many thanks also go to His Highness Mahārāja Pushpraj Singh for facilitating my research in Rewa, and to Dr. H. A. Quazi for his aid at the Baghela Museum, Rewa. The residents of Terāhī, Kadwāhā, Chandrehe, and Ranod have continued to make distant villages feel familiar, and I am particularly grateful to the Yadav family for making me welcome in Isagarh; to Ramkishore Singh and Ram Barosi Sharma for their cordiality in Kadwāhā; and to Muzaffar Ahmed Ansari, also known as Kalley-bhai, whose insight was very greatly appreciated in December of 2012. In Vārāṇasī, Ramuchandra Pandit helped make the city become truly another home over the years. Many thanks also go to Virendra Singh, Rakesh Ranjan, and Surendra Gambhir for giving me the greatest gift of all: the ability to speak Hindi with fluency in the field. The Krishnamurthy family deserves my highest gratitude for opening their home to me without question, first in Bombay and then Bangalore, and my world in India would generally be poorer if I had not been fortunate enough to meet Madhu Singh Gupta, her son, Shaurya Singh, and her family in Gwalior many years ago.

While in India, I have been fortunate to find many colleagues who have been exceptionally generous in sharing their wealth of knowledge. First and foremost have been Dr. R. N. Misra, who has deeply enhanced my understanding of central Indian art and history through extensive conversation, and Dr. B. D. Chattopadhyaya, who was my host project supervisor when I was just beginning my fieldwork. Dr. Romila Thapar and Dr. Devangana Desai additionally provided me with articles, references, and comments at important moments in the project. More recently, Dr. Parul Pandhya Dhar and Dr. Upinder Singh provided me with the opportunity to present related material at Delhi University. Dr. Vandana Sinha deserves special mention for her assistance in obtaining photographs and navigating sources at the AIIS research library and photographic archives. Mark Dyzkowski also took an interest in my project at an early stage and gave me a forum to present and discuss early findings in his house overlooking Narad Ghat. Lisa Owen and Michael Bednar were my intrepid travel companions during that first fateful visit to Menāl in 1998, and the sharp eyes, friendship, and wit of Kimberly Masteller, Donovan Dodrill, and Deborah Stein were invaluable on site in 2000–2002, as was the assistance of Sarah Hagevik and Katherine Broad, who acted as occasional research assistants in the field.

This project has greatly benefitted from the generous assistance of many friends and colleagues over the years. Particular thanks go to Pika Ghosh and Richard Davis for their close readings of the manuscript; to Molly Aitken and Deborah Hutton for serving as generous and critical readers; and to Alka Patel

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Finally, this book would not have been possible without the love and endurance of my family: to my parents, Yael and Jerome; my brother, Dan, his wife, Carissa, and young Islay; Lucy and Eric Lin; and finally, Erika T. Lin, whose sustained intellectual engagement, emotional presence, and continual patience has been the most important of all. This book is dedicated to my grandmother, Lutka, and my only regret is that neither she nor my grandfather, Jacob Korngold, lived long enough to see it to its fruition.

A NOTE ON TRANSLATION, TRANSLITERATION, AND DATES

Standard diacritical markings for Sanskrit names and terms are employed throughout this book, in order to retain clarity and precision in meaning for specialists and to help foreground etymologies and word plays that are, at times, essential to the argumentation. However, for the purpose of making the material accessible to nonspecialist readers, I have chosen to subordinate Sanskrit terms that are not well known by using English equivalents wherever possible in the main body of the book, and by including the more precise Sanskrit words in parentheses. In the endnotes, I do not take such measures; I simply use the Sanskrit term whenever applicable, without providing an English translation.

Dates in this book are noted in the eras provided in relevant primary sources, with equivalents given according to the modern Gregorian calendar, traditionally starting from the assumed birth of Christ (AD), also known to scholars as the Common Era (CE). The most frequently encountered era is Vikram Samvāt (VS), named after the mythical prince Vikramāditya, which begins in 56 BC. The others include the Śaka (or Śālivāha) (SE), Kalachuri (K), and Hijra eras (AH). The Śaka era, which remains in use in many parts of India today, begins in c. AD 24. The Kalachuri era, which was employed in inscriptions by the dynasty of the same name, is calibrated to 0 = c. AD 248–249. Finally, the Hijra era is calibrated to the date of Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina, which corresponds to July 16, AD 622.

Unless otherwise stated, all translations are mine.

Introduction

Encountering the Monastery

Prelude to a Palace

During his annual tour of the countryside in 1864–65, Alexander Cunningham, the first director general of the Archaeological Survey of India, made an exciting and unexpected discovery in the rural hinterlands of what is today the state of Madhya Pradesh. Approximately halfway between Jhansi and Guna, in an area that was then part of the princely state of Gwalior, he came across the "old decayed town" of Ranod, which he noted as having once been "a place of some consequence." Amidst the various "Hindu and Muhammadan remains" was a monument that truly captured his eye. He described it as a "remarkable building" and identified it as "an old Hindu palace" known locally as the Kokai-mahal. Delighted with his discovery, Cunningham penned two substantive paragraphs in praise of the building's supremely functional architectural form and refreshingly sparse ornamentation, which struck him as almost "classical" in its aesthetics. He extolled particularly the positioning of the veranda and the "very ingenious and effective" arrangement of the stepped roofs of the surrounding "cloisters," which allowed for adequate ventilation during the hot season (fig. 0.1). He even went so far as to praise the joints of the main building's roof as comparable to the "sloping marble roofs of the Greeks," and the building's "battlements" as forming "a massive and appropriate finish to this singularly solid building."[1]

Cunningham's immediate designation of the building as a royal residence may have been due to the presence of a monumental Sanskrit inscription, which he also described in great detail.[2] The inscription, which had been translated and published nearly two decades earlier by Henry Cope, the then-secretary of the Archaeological Society of Delhi, centered on a genealogy of kings who were generous, powerful, and venerated by their subjects; whose "dominions extended to all parts of the earth"; and who expressed themselves as "just, energetic, mild, wise, brave, and pious" by constructing many step-wells and temples.[3] Despite the fact that Cope's publication was well known to be "'incorrect' both in the reading and in the translation," Cunningham took it as a point of departure to speculate, at great length, on the history of the palace and its royal patron. He declared the patron to be a king, or *rāja,* named Someśwara, who had "re-peopled the deserted city of *Mayapura,* where he built a lofty palace for his own residence, which was surrounded with reservoirs of pure water."[4]

Although ingenious, Cunningham's deductions were ultimately misguided. When the Ranod inscription was finally correctly read and translated nearly three decades later, in 1892 by the esteemed epigrapher Professor F. Kielhorn, it quickly became clear that the building was not a palace at all but, rather, a rare example of a surviving medieval Hindu monastery.[5] More specifically, the inscription described a hermitage that was once populated by holy Hindu sages, who worshipped the god Śiva and belonged to a prominent spiritual lineage known during the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries by the name of Mattamayūra. By the 1890s, this revelation was not surprising, as at least two other Mattamayūra inscriptions had been uncovered at sites in central India.[6] Cunningham's archaeological assistant, J. D. Beglar, had already begun to cast doubt by the mid-1870s on the initial identification of Ranod as a Hindu palace. When he encountered a similar building

at a place later identified as the Mattamayūra site of Chandrehe, he cautiously wrote, "I call [this building] a palace, but I think I will be more correct if I call it a monastery, for the inscriptions on the sides of its entrance mention no kings, but on the other hand record the names of various ascetics."[7]

The excitement of early archaeologists in uncovering these monuments is not surprising, given the extreme rarity of both palaces and monasteries surviving from any period prior to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. What is in fact surprising is that these monasteries remain nearly as obscure today as they did 150 years ago, particularly among specialists in Indian art. Despite the early mishap with epigraphic sources, the inscriptions, by contrast, have become fairly well known and frequently discussed among those who study history and religion. The disinterest among art historians, nonetheless, follows well within the changing historiographic concerns of the early twentieth century. What Cunningham so adored about the monastery at Ranod was the unflinching structural clarity that reminded him of the Greeks, whose architecture remained the epitome of classical perfection in the minds of both the British and Indian elites.[8] The sculpted excessiveness of the Indian temple, by contrast, was distracting with its "multiplicity of details," monstrous figures, and heathen divinities (fig. 0.2).[9] Of the exterior building, Cunningham noted the "highly indecent" and "disgustingly obscene" nature of the images inserted "in the recesses between the pillars of the transept and sanctum."[10] While he concluded that the overall effect was nonetheless pleasing, he was less kind to the nearby Viśvanātha temple, where he criticized the "half-size elephant statues" projecting from the angles of the pillared balcony roofs, noting that "the general effect of the building is much injured by these huge monsters suddenly protruding in mid-air from the corners of the building."[11] Indeed, the building at Ranod may have struck Cunningham as a relief—a much-appreciated contrast to such garish excesses.

Within a few decades, the rising tides of nationalism brought about a scholarly turn toward traditional arts and the temple, as artists and Indologists alike began looking to indigenous religion and craft in order to recover the artistry of an "authentic" Indian past.[12] By 1918, Ananda Coomaraswamy had begun his battle against European scholars, such as Alfred Foucher, who emphasized the classical influence on early Indian art and posited more specifically the Greek origin for early Buddhist imagery.[13] Writing from Calcutta in the 1930s, Stella Kramrisch proclaimed the sensuous and the spiritual as the roots of Indian visual culture. She emphasized the dynamism of the temple wall as a manifestation of *prakṛiti,* or the material substance of god—as *puruṣa* (cosmic man) made visible as it emanated outward through the progression of buttresses and sculpted images. The genius of India's art, for Kramrisch and her followers, was not in classicizing clean lines but, rather, in the sheer difference articulated through fleshiness, plasticity, and sinuous curves.[14]

Within this intellectual climate, the same factors that made the discovery of new monasteries so memorable for archaeological officials just half a century earlier may have contributed to their subsequent obscurity. Beyond Beglar, we find no further praise of the medieval Hindu monastery as superbly executed architecture. The corpus continued to be heralded by archaeologists, but for

FIG. 0.1.
"Kokai-mahal,"
c. 9th–11th century AD.
Seen from the northeast,
Ranod.

FIG. 0.2.
Overview from the
southeast, c. AD 1025–50.
Kandariyā Mahādeva
temple, Khajurāho.

their historical importance rather than for their aesthetic value.[15] Indeed, the last moments of true excitement about the monastery as a building type can be traced to the mid-1910s. When M. B. Garde discovered three more monasteries at other sites in Gwalior State during the 1914–15 archaeological season, he was greatly celebrated by John Marshall, then-director general of the Archaeological Survey of India, who deemed two—at Surwāyā and Ranod—worthy of illustration in his annual report.[16] Marshall's excitement at having taken a solid step forward was dampened perhaps only by the fact that the monuments illustrated in the plate were incorrectly labeled—the monastery at Ranod as that of Surwāyā, and the monastery at Surwāyā as that of Ranod. Perhaps indicative of the karmic effects of scholarly omission is the fact that in 1998, over 80 years later, a similar error of mislabeling was made in the otherwise authoritative and carefully produced *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, in which the monastery at Terāhī was misidentified as Surwāyā in the accompanying volume of plates.[17]

Recovering the Monastery

Taking the remarkable buildings encountered by Alexander Cunningham and his successor as its point of departure, this book represents a first-ever attempt to situate Hindu monastic architecture within its proper place, not as a peripheral anecdote to the history of Indian art but, rather, as a critical intervention within the canon as a whole.[18] In doing so, it breaks with scholarly tendencies to focus almost exclusively on temples as the primary sites for artistic production and instead draws attention toward the living practitioners who acted as key agents in the creation of new forms, and whose presence was also pivotal to the daily dynamics of sacred and ritual space. Situated visibly among temples and within the ambit of urbanizing communities, the medieval Hindu monastery, or *maṭha*, represented more than just a remarkable new kind of residence. It signaled the institutionalization of asceticism into a formalized monastic practice, as well as the emergence of prominent gurus as major public figures, who acted both as divinized spiritual teachers and as religious advisers to powerful ruling kings. It was the ability of increasingly influential gurus to navigate between the spiritual and the worldly that was central to the development of new religious movements, and to the establishment of new kinds of monastic institutions, in the centuries leading up to the turn of the first millennium AD.

As a monument, the maṭha functioned at its most basic level as a shelter for a guru, or revered religious teacher. Derived from the Sanskrit word meaning "dispeller of ignorance," "heavy," or "weighty," the guru in the most ancient of historical periods, nearly three thousand years ago, was an ascetic teacher of the highest priestly caste, under whom upper-caste members of society would spend part of their childhoods studying before moving on to marriage and householding society. Over the centuries, the guru's role evolved to accommodate the changing shape of theology and ritual practice. New forms of devotionalism and the rise of non-*brāhmaṇical* and Tantric religious lineages transformed the guru from a high-caste teacher into a figure revered as a direct spiritual descendant of a supreme

deity, most often Śiva or Viṣṇu, as a vehicle for liberation. By the turn of the first millennium AD, the guru's identity as both a divinized spiritual teacher and a focus for ritualized worship had led to the development of elaborate monasteries (maṭhas) throughout the Indian subcontinent.[19]

Given the importance of prominent gurus and their branching monastic institutions in Indic society even today, it might seem natural that the buildings within which they resided would occupy a critical position in the canon of South Asian art and architectural history. This is especially true given how many modern-day maṭhas trace their origins back to ancient and medieval India. Yet remarkably little has been published on Hindu monastic architecture, and relatively few scholars are aware of the corpus of extant material. A few factors may have prevented such monasteries from becoming the focus of more vibrant scholarly study. One is simply the paucity of evidence. Inscriptional sources frequently record the construction of maṭhas and the patronage of the gurus who were in charge of them. But, unlike in the Western medieval world, or even in the case of the famous and more frequently studied Buddhist rock-cut monasteries (*vihāras*) at places like Ajanta and Sanchi, very few Hindu monasteries still survive today. To date, I have been able to identify just over a dozen examples within the Indian archaeological landscape. In addition to those discovered by Cunningham and his successors at Ranod, Chandrehe, Surwāyā, Kadwāhā, and Terāhī, monasteries still stand in various degrees of disrepair at the sites of Koḍal, Raneh, Chunari, and Indor in Madhya Pradesh; at Paddhargadh (Puvrāgaḍh) in Kutch, Gujarat; at Menāl in Rajasthan; at Narannag in Jammu and Kaśmīr; and at Balsane in Maharashtra. These are joined by a few fragments of early monasteries, possibly of the seventh or eighth centuries, that remain embedded within present-day buildings in larger temple towns in eastern India, and particularly in Orissa and Chattisgarh.[20]

Although geographically diverse, the monasteries of this fragmentary corpus are united in terms of their chronology and their general cultic affiliation. All date primarily between the eighth and twelfth centuries—the period most frequently referred to as the "early medieval" by historians of premodern India. More specifically, the early medieval period has been frequently seen as one that gave rise to complex political formations, driven by the regionalization of royal authority and reinforced through networks of localized feudatory kingdoms. These newly emergent rulers have been understood as actively participating in the patronage of new religious orders, and particularly in those that positioned themselves as alternatives to older orthodox forms of brāhmaṇical Hinduism and that emphasized the efficacy of temple ritual. The historiography of periodization of premodern India is admittedly quite vexed, as it is in many parts of the postcolonial world. It is beyond the scope of my current project to rehash the various arguments, other than to briefly note that the dynamics traceable through monasteries carry the potential to shift the dynamics of the debates, by introducing prominent gurus and their monastic communities as significant agents in the reshaping of political and religious communities.[21]

Given this history, it is not surprising that most of the surviving monasteries appear in contexts associated with new religious groups, particularly those who

favored the god Śiva, and more particularly in association with two of the more prominent Śaiva religious orders, known in their time as the Pāśupatas and the Śaiva Siddhāntins. Although textual sources suggested that other groups, including other Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, and Jainas, also likely built monasteries, these remain undiscovered in the archaeological landscape. It is possible, and indeed likely, that their residences were built of perishable materials, such as brick or wood. If this were in fact the case, then the crucial question becomes not why do we begin to see monasteries appearing in this period, but why do we begin seeing some groups building their residences in the permanent medium of stone? The answer to this question is rooted in a broader history of the centuries leading up to the turn of the first millennium, which, as Alexis Sanderson has suggested, marked the rise of Śaivism as a dominant religion, favored greatly by royal patrons.[22]

The monasteries that still stand today remain a crucial archive. Through them, one can discern the graduated process through which loosely organized mendicants became fully established as institutionalized monastic disciplinary orders.[23] The chronology of monastic architecture follows this development so closely that it is hard to think of the two as being unrelated, particularly since Śaivas were well suited to such a transition. Originally both esoteric and eremitical, Śaiva monastic orders derived their power through the exclusivity of their practices, which could be learned only through the mediation of a fully liberated guru. Entrance into the community was predicated on rituals of initiation, performed by the guru, who also acted as a teacher and disseminator of religious knowledge. Because status was linked to levels of initiation rather than necessarily to caste, Śaivas also offered more social flexibility than more orthodox brāhmaṇical, or traditional Hindu, contemporaries, for whom access to ritual was dependent largely on caste. As a result, Śaivas became adept at integrating new communities into their fold. By the seventh and eighth centuries, Śaiva gurus began attracting royal patronage from kings seeking religious initiation. By the ninth and tenth centuries, organized monastic orders emerged at the center of royal states and society and began functioning in new ways, not only as foci for ritual activity, but also as landed, self-sustaining administrative institutions responsible for the collection and redistribution of taxes and agricultural revenue. With this incorporation into realms of the courtly and urban, Śaiva monasteries emerged as complex religious architectures with highly formalized plans, rendered durably in stone and on appropriately monumental scales.[24]

On a basic structural level, the domestication and urbanization of Śaiva monasticism followed a pattern similar to that of earlier Buddhist and brāhmaṇical renunciants, who began forming alternative religious communities in the middle of the first millennium BC. These early movements typically began with the appearance of small groups of sages living in relative isolation in caves or simple huts in the wilderness. Over time, many of these groups began establishing bases in both the outskirts and the centers of larger towns and regional capitals. It was in urbanizing areas that renouncers found not only a ready audience, but also a strong base of patrons that included kings as well as ministers, bankers, and merchants. The groups that were most successful in establishing monastic centers in the heart of larger

FIG. 0.3.
View of Stūpa 3 and the Great Stūpa 1, c. 1st century BC–1st century AD. Seen from the northwest, Sanchi.

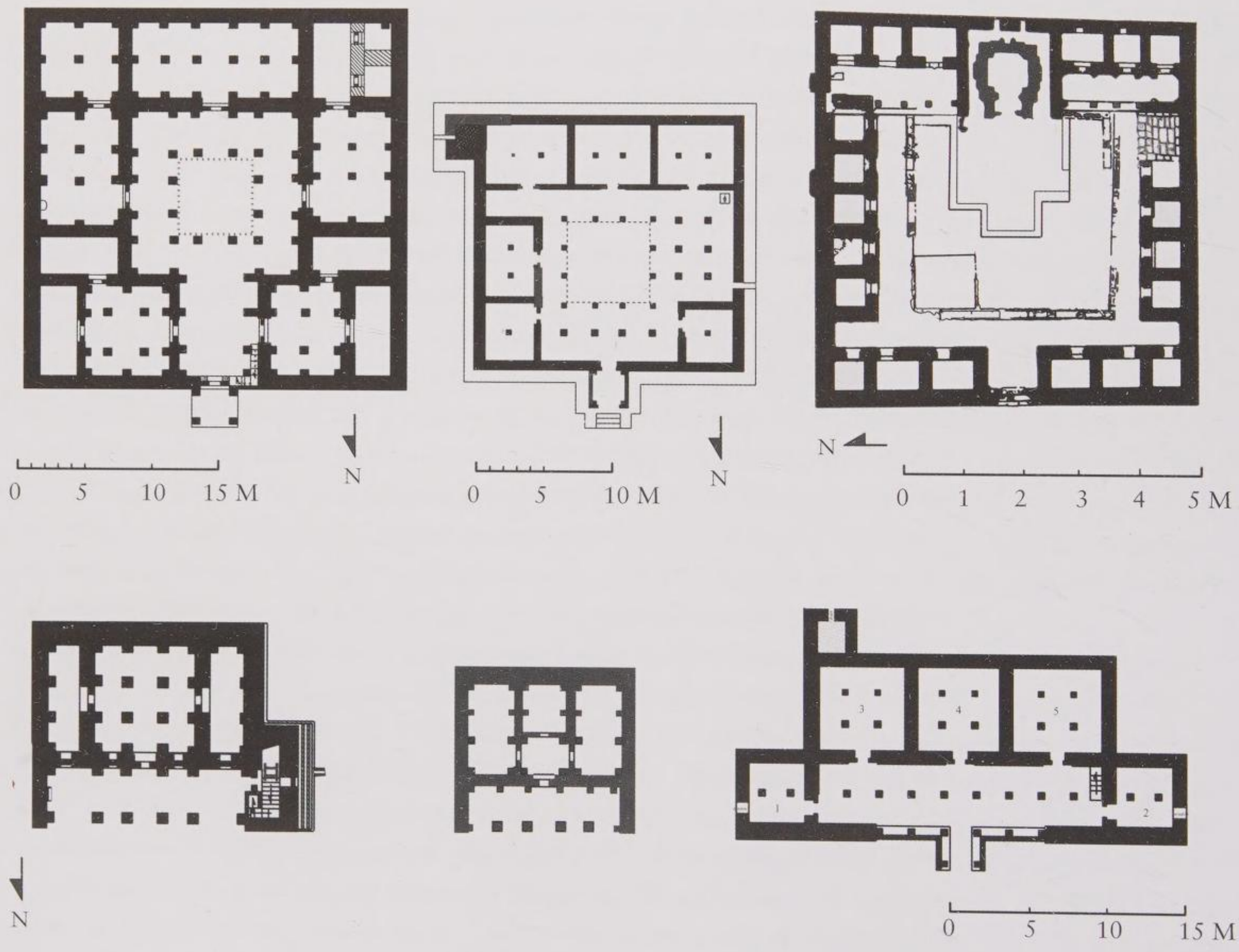
settlements were the ones who eschewed extreme austerities and antisocial practices, at least on the level of the institution, if not the individual ascetic.[25]

In the earliest eras of organized monastic practice, it was the Buddhists who flourished particularly, first through royal patronage and then through widespread popular support. As Buddhist monks became integrated into society, new forms of ritual architecture, exemplified through *stūpas* and *caitya* halls, were formalized and systematically produced at key pilgrimage sites. These were built at crossroads and just outside larger settlements, where they formed new foci for both monastic and lay ritual activity and attracted viewers through their monumental size and visual grandeur (fig. 0.3). But these sacred mounds and shrines were also always accompanied by vihāras (Buddhist monasteries), which served as dwellings for resident monks. Deeply interiorized structures, vihāras grew from their simplest forms in the centuries leading up to the Common Era into highly complex and intricately painted monuments containing monastic residences as well as internal shrines, like those seen most famously at sites such as Sanchi and Ajanta. But the fundamental underlying plan of the vihāra throughout the centuries remained fairly consistent: vihāras invariably were approximately square buildings, either freestanding or rock-cut, that consisted of a veranda followed by a series of small residential cells for individual monks, radiating around a central courtyard (figs. 0.4, 0.5).[26]

As in the case of Buddhist vihāras, Śaiva dwellings expressed a changing dynamic relationship between the interiority of the ascetic community and the exteriority of the world beyond the monastery's walls. They were often built as large monastic institutions that frequently fell into one of two consistent categorical types. The first was the monumental monastery, often described in inscriptions using the term "maṭha," which was organized around an open courtyard. The second was the ascetic retreat, commonly referred to as an *āśrama* (hermitage) or *tapovana* (forest for austerities). In both cases, the Śaiva monastery

FIG. 0.4.
Overview of Vihāra 51, c. 5th century AD. Seen from the east, Sanchi.

FIG. 0.5.
Comparison of monastery plans, including, clockwise from the top left, the Mattamayūra monastery at Kadwāhā (c. 10th century AD); a Pāśupata monastery in the main complex at Menāl (c. 1160s AD); the Buddhist Vihāra 45 at Sanchi (between the 7th and 11th centuries AD); a second Pāśupata monastery at Menāl (c. 1160s AD); the original hermitage at Surwāyā (c. 8th century AD); and the original hermitage at Ranod (c. 9th century AD).



differed greatly from earlier and contemporary Buddhist vihāras. Whereas vihāras can be characterized by their uniformity in program and plan, Śaiva maṭhas and āśramas utilized a greater degree of variety. Instead of rows of identical cubicles, as one would expect to see in earlier Buddhist vihāras, one sees complex groupings of spaces that seem to follow patterns more typical of residential architecture, such as those seen in *havelis* (courtyard mansions). As in the case of vernacular architecture, residential chambers were most likely tucked away in the upper story.[27] The majority of rooms on the ground story, by contrast, seem to have served more ceremonial or specialized functions and may have included small shrines and offices as well as larger ceremonial halls and rooms for recitation (*vidyābhyāsa-gṛha* or *vidyāvyākhyā-maṇḍapa*).

Within a broader history of Indian architecture, the chronology of the Hindu monastery is highly significant, particularly when considering the development of the Indian temple that is more often the focus of scholarly studies. Although the temple as a monument has a longer history, stemming at least back to the era of the imperial Guptas (c. fifth–sixth centuries), it was during the second half of the first millennium that it evolved into what many scholars recognize as its most complex and dynamic forms. The distinctive architectural vocabularies of Nāgara and Drāviḍa temples, which dominated North and South India, respectively, were rooted in monuments founded during the seventh and eighth centuries, often at sites that appear to have had Śaiva cultic affiliations and been populated by Śaiva ascetic practitioners who were just beginning to attract the attention of prominent royal patrons.[28] The temples of this period, even more so than those of the earlier Gupta "golden age" of artistic achievement, continued to form the basis for the architectural experimentation that crescendoed into a peak in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It was during these centuries that new, highly inventive approaches crystallized; they expressed the multiplicity and omnipresence of a divine presence responsible for the very act of cosmic creation, and that was ultimately beyond the power of human comprehension.[29] The efflorescence of temple-building associated with this period was deeply felt at places that today remain central to the history of Indian art as epitomes of artistic achievement. But at the same time, they also should be seen as indexes of the formalization of new religious orders, as even the most canonical of temple centers—such as Khajurāho, Bhubaneśvara, and Thanjavur—emerged in conjunction with the royal sponsorship of prominent gurus and their associated monastic networks.[30]

Often compared in inscriptional sources to the mountainous abodes of the gods, temples were veritable triumphs of engineering and technological innovation; they towered high into the sky and dazzled the viewer through their sheer mass and lavishly sculpted surfaces, populated by beautiful gods and celestial servants. As centers for worship, they also served as foci for ritual, economic, and social activity—as places where worshippers came to experience the living presence of gods, exchange goods in the outlying market, and gather during festivals. The development of temple centers has thus often been associated with the extension of royally sanctioned ritual activity and state institutions into developing urban centers and newly incorporated rural peripheries. But the relationship between

royalty and divinity was negotiated through intermediary agents, including a vast array of theologians and ritual practitioners who were endowed with the spiritual authority to perform rituals in temples.[31]

By turning toward monasteries, this book draws particular attention to the living practitioners who served as key agents in the growth of wide-scale devotional activity, both through their role as temple priests and attendants as well as in their function as foci for ritual in their own right. Given the dependency of temples on the living religious communities responsible for their construction, maintenance, and administration, it is not surprising that monasteries constituted a parallel development. In fact, as I show in this book and elsewhere, monasteries often not only preceded but also served as a stimulus for the development of larger temple towns.[32] In some cases, temples were built in conjunction with the resettlement of high-caste *brāhmaṇas* into royally donated villages (*agrahāras*). In others, they grew around already existing religious centers, populated by Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, and Jaina mendicants. As settlements grew, often in the peripheries of older established sacred centers, so too did the responsibilities of the core practitioners, who were endowed with the privilege and power to perform special rituals and to attend daily to gods enshrined in temples.[33] The close relationship between communities of living renunciants and lay devotees was articulated through the simultaneous expansion and renovation of monastic residences and temple complexes.

This book's approach to recovering the monastery, as both a distinct architectural form and a locus for the unfolding of larger histories, is twofold. On the one hand, I look at monasteries archaeologically, examining them as buildings that emerged through time. I lay out chronological phases of construction and reconstruction—based on careful field survey, original photographs, and drawings—in order to trace the emergence of new built forms. On the other hand, I write from a particular historiographic perspective, in an era inflected by the recognition that history is neither singular nor linear, and that the forms through which historical narratives are woven have as much content as the narratives themselves. Embedded in each of the surviving monasteries is a history of the production, and re-production, of sacred sites, following the monastery as it evolved from its origins as a shelter for ascetics into a potent and complex religious architecture, with its meaning embedded in the interaction between built form and ritual action. To capture some sense of this interaction, I examine both the specific histories of individual monuments and the larger geographical expansion of monastic sites, both as diachronic progressions and as simultaneous events. I seek not only to document their development as a distinctive architecture but also to reimagine the complex historical processes through which individual sites came into existence.[34]

In deciphering the narratives woven through monastic dwellings, I look to inscriptions, ritual manuals, and architectural treatises as sources that can help illuminate the meanings and functions of residential spaces. But at the same time, I see the primary experience of architecture as articulated less through text than through the dynamics of movement, action, and form. It was in the vitality of

their architectural forms that monasteries presented the clearest contrast both to the earlier traditions of Buddhist monastic architecture and to their accompanying temples. While temples towered toward the sky and expressed themselves outwardly through masses of sculpture, monasteries were cloaked by deceptively severe exterior surfaces that opened up primarily after the moment of entry. They unfolded horizontally through complex and interlocking patterns that directly indexed the bodily activities and movements of the holy sages moving steadily on a path toward spiritual liberation. The highly potent rituals performed daily by ascetic practitioners, in turn, infused the monastery's interior spaces with an intrinsic power that accrued extrinsic value in the world beyond. As they became more closely integrated with royal patrons, monasteries acquired increasingly richer stores of wealth. They became repositories for revenue and for the redistribution of goods and properties, as well as centers for festivals, privately patronized rites, and public ritual performances. But at the same time, they expressed their power most clearly not through opulence nor excessive ornament but, rather, through a calculated austerity. This approach may well have constituted an "aesthetics of asceticism," expressed through the severity of exterior surfaces.[35]

By taking monastic architecture seriously, both as an index of a critical history and as a highly sophisticated built form, this book returns, in a way, to a nineteenth-century moment, to consider why Alexander Cunningham was struck with such awe when encountering the monastery at Ranod. Indeed, Cunningham was not wrong to deduce a royal imprint on the building, which was, in fact, founded by gurus who flourished through sustained royal patronage. However, in early medieval India, in the world in which these monasteries first arose, even the king himself became merely a pupil who bowed down to the holy guru. In looking at the complex relationships among the gurus, kings, and larger communities that were woven through the structure of surviving monastic sites, this book reclaims the monastery's role in restructuring, through its architecture, a wider range of social, religious, and political relationships. While Cunningham and his contemporaries were not able to read the inscriptions that provided secondary historical context, they nonetheless responded quite powerfully to an architecture that was intended, even in its original incarnation, to evoke a powerful response. In this way, I look not merely at how architecture reflects or responds passively to history, but also at how history itself can be shaped through architectural forms.

The Case of the "Drunken Peacocks"

Although this book lays the framework for understanding the development of Śaiva monasteries, it is not intended as a comprehensive survey. Rather, it focuses on a wide-ranging and cohesive set of buildings associated with a single, branching monastic lineage (*vaṃśa*), well known in their time as the Mattamayūras. While the origins of the lineage name remains unknown, it may well have been intended to call attention to the Mattamayūras' status as the quintessential Śaiva sages. Whereas the term "*matta*" implies a kind of intoxication or madness that comes from a state of liberated spiritual bliss, "*mayūra*" refers to the peacock, often

described in literary sources as achieving its full unfurled glory as it shrieked wildly to herald the coming of the monsoon rains.[36] Arguably one of the most influential Śaiva lineages at the turn of the first millennium in central India, the Mattamayūras represent a particularly useful study. Not only do their monasteries remain the earliest surviving examples of a broader general type, but together their history spans over four centuries and nearly 300 miles (480 kilometers). In addition, the dwellings themselves are multilayered, often built and rebuilt over the course of several successive generations. Thus they offer a tremendous opportunity to examine the processes through which monasteries were initially formulated, as well as how individual buildings, like their resident communities, responded to transformations over time.

Altogether, at least a dozen monasteries, some of which stand and some of which are known only through inscriptions, can be associated with the Mattamayūras. Of these, at least five or six remain in a relatively good state of preservation, enabling a close examination of the development and expansion of both individual sites and larger networks. The earliest moments of institutionalization, at some point in the eighth or ninth century, can be traced to the central Indian region of Gopakṣetra, or ancient Gopādri, through fragments embedded in the structure of monuments that were greatly reworked and expanded in the tenth and eleventh centuries. From these relatively obscure origins, the Mattamayūras branched outward to form a wider network of monastic sites, most notably taking strong roots further east in central India, within the kingdom of the Kalachuris in the region of Ḍāhaladeśa, by the turn of the first millennium. From North and central India they moved rapidly to Orissa, Bengal, and Maharashtra, and southward down through the Deccan to Karṇāṭaka and Tamil Nadu. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they controlled a powerful religious network ranging from the mountains of Kaśmīr to the seacoasts of the south. But the heart of their monastic network remained in central India, now the modern-day state of Madhya Pradesh, at least through the thirteenth century, and it is there that their presence remains most clearly felt in the archaeological landscape today (fig. 0.6).[37]

In addition to a unique corpus of buildings, the Mattamayūras have left a substantial epigraphical record detailing the succession of individual sages, their religious practices, and their relationship to courtly patrons. The history revealed through these sources is remarkably cohesive. The inscriptions provide a nearly unbroken genealogy of sages who lived through six centuries of the sect's history, spanning no fewer than four geographic regions and at least three royal kingdoms. It is no surprise that the inscriptional evidence has garnered so much more attention than the monasteries, as it provides a rich array of corresponding names and dates. In addition to effectively establishing links between disparate monastic sites, the inscriptional record has enabled historians to piece together a fairly comprehensive branching lineage of sages, with a degree of precision that is truly rare for the early medieval period. Not only does the genealogy span wide geographies and many centuries, but it also enables us to trace the movements of lineage at the level of individual teachers and sites. For example, inscriptions from Kadwāhā, Gurgī, and Chandrehe allow us to map the movement of a guru named

FIG. 0.6.
Map of monastic sites in North and central India, showing major regions and dynasties.

Prabhāvaśiva across over 220 miles (350 kilometers), first eastward from Kadwāhā to Gurgī through the patronage of King Yuvarājadeva I (c. AD 915–945) of the famed Kalachuri dynasty. They then allow us to continue following his disciple, Praśāntaśiva, as he extended the network first locally from Gurgī to Chandrehe (14 miles, or 22 kilometers, to the south) and finally to the pilgrimage city of Vārāṇasī (Banāras) (118 miles, or 190 kilometers, to the northeast). The ability to trace such connections between archaeological sites is extremely unusual for the early medieval period, especially in North and central India, where the epigraphic record remains much more fragmentary than elsewhere on the subcontinent.[38]

For an architectural historian, the corpus of inscriptions is more of a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the textual record provides rich historical details that can help contextualize the architectural material found at Mattamayūra sites. On the other hand, the inscriptional material can be somewhat deceptive, particularly on questions of origins and early histories. Although inscriptions frequently tell the story of a site's establishment, only one or two actually date to the moment of initial construction. In most cases, in fact, the inscriptions postdate the establishment of their sites by anywhere from 25 to 150 years. But these still can be useful if one bears in mind their intention, which was less to commemorate the making of a new site than to highlight subsequent acts of rebuilding and renovation. In addition to recording the expansion of residential spaces, the inscriptions often detail the conversion of smaller hermitages into much larger and multifunctional complexes through the addition of accompanying temples, step-wells, and gardens. Although not all of the architectural activities described in the inscriptional verses are still visible today in situ, layered chronologies can still be traced through the fabric of surviving buildings and dated more precisely on the basis of architectural and sculptural style.

The close correlation between inscriptions and architectural histories makes the monasteries of the Mattamayūras much more than just a case study brought together through the fortuity of survival. It puts them at the center of a rich archive that is simultaneously expansive in scope yet tightly focused, not only on the emergence of new forms of monasticism, but also on the process of institutionalization itself. This was a process that went far beyond the dictates of a single sect or lineage, with ramifications for the establishment of a much larger religious tradition. As the Mattamayūras grew in prominence over the course of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, their monasteries became key sites for the dissemination of Śaiva Siddhānta, one of the most rapidly growing strands of medieval Hindu religion. Literally translatable as the "fully completed" way of worshipping the god Śiva, Śaiva Siddhānta was one of many traditions within Śaivism competing for royal patronage and popular support during this period. Among the most successful in this competition, Śaiva Siddhānta became the primary religion among many of medieval India's most prominent kings.

Because it was in southern India that Śaiva Siddhānta was longest sustained through royal patronage, the religion as a whole is most frequently identified with that region. However, during the ninth and tenth centuries, Śaiva Siddhānta was connected to two well-known centers of textual production, in the far northern

reaches of Kaśmīr and the far southern region of Tamil Nadu, respectively. Despite the fact that these two textual centers were clearly connected, the routes of Śaiva Siddhānta's transmission have remained obscure. In this sense, a key missing link may be found in cases such as the expansive Mattamayūra monastic network—encompassing many important places for both state administration and pilgrimage. The movement of human practitioners implied through the establishment of new monastic networks, such as those represented by Mattamayūra sites, offers great potential to reimagine and reanimate the process through which religious knowledge was actively transmitted across wide geographies. Such monastic networks have had a long-lasting legacy, as Śaiva Siddhānta remains among the most popular and widespread strands of Hinduism in India even today.

Architecture and Agency

In attempting to situate a new a category of building within the growing canon of southern Asian art, I experimented with different methodological approaches and investigated a wide range of sources. I looked closely and comparatively at other Asian and European contexts to get a sense for the various ways in which monasteries have been designed and distributed. My interest was both in the dynamics of individual buildings, particularly in terms of the distributions of function in interior spaces, and in the ways in which monastic dwellings engaged their broader landscapes and geographies. I examined both cenobitic and eremitic traditions, such as in the case of the desert monasteries of early Christian Egypt, and I looked at how tensions between asceticism and worldly engagement were resolved through institutional policies, artistic patronage, and the restructuring of architectural forms.[39] I turned to inscriptions and Sanskrit textual sources to understand ritual practices and theological concerns relevant both to Śaiva Siddhānta and to Śaivism as a whole, keeping in mind that textual accounts represent less a reality of actual practice than an idealization of a ritual world. And, finally, I looked to archaeological reports and ethnographic accounts in order to locate analogies in the use of architectural spaces between the present and the past.

In looking through a range of sources, and particularly at archaeological reports and inscriptions, my goal was to draw out the multiple histories that shaped monastic sites at many moments, from their origins to the present day. The diachronicity of this approach is one that draws as much from the fields of archaeology and religious anthropology as it does from recent movements within the history of art and architecture. Looking diachronically should not be mistaken for an erasure of history in leveling out the distance between present and past. Rather, it enables a way of thinking that takes into account the fact that any present-day encounter with a site or monument will inevitably be mediated through many historical layers, each of which effected changes in the structure and meaning of a place. In the case of the Mattamayūras, each monastery was the product of several centuries of significant renovations. As a result, the monastery should be seen less as a fixed architectural type than as an index of the processes of

transformation brought about, first and foremost, through the agency of the living communities it sustained.

In recognizing the agency of ascetic communities, and particularly the superintending guru, I am also suggesting that Śaiva monastic architecture functioned as a key medium in the remaking of ritual worlds. The monastery, though highly formalized as an architectural type, was never a fixed and static structure. Rather, its forms evolved and were transformed in order to meet the requirements of a growing and changing religious community. As a medium, architecture itself can possess the agency to transform human interactions, relations, and experiences by shaping actions and movements through carefully defined spaces. A building can function as a visual image or icon, creating meaning through associations with form. But it also works haptically and experientially on the body, as it moves the individual through processes of both unfolding and differentiation in time and space. Distinctions such as unconsecrated/consecrated, interior/exterior, initiated/uninitiated, monumental/minute, and permanent/impermanent can be materially created, and negotiated, through the act of building. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the creator of the universe in the Vedas is envisioned as the divine architect Viśvakarman (All-Maker), who designed the fabric of all things.[40]

Throughout the book, I make efforts to think about how spaces within monasteries both activated, and were activated by, human bodily movements, and particularly by the ritual practices that were part of the daily life of the monastery. In addition to looking at ritual manuals, inscriptional texts, architectural treatises, and ethnographies, I have also found it useful to draw upon methods of access analysis originally introduced by Ian Hodder and Clive Orton in 1976 and developed further by subsequent scholars, most notably Bill Hiller and Julienne Hansen in 1984. The system that they outlined for analyzing the relationship between space and social life involved the calculation of levels of permeability, in order to determine the relative accessibility and inaccessibility—or private and public nature—of different spaces within buildings. The methods of spatial analysis presented in these studies has since been employed, revised, and rethought by archaeologists working in many areas of the ancient world, but the basic ideas have been enduring. In addition to arguing that the relationship between social life and architecture was determined at the level of space rather than at the level of appearance, these early studies pointed the direction toward understanding that architecture itself provides the material preconditions for movements and encounters that are not merely symbolic. Rather, architecture carries agency to structure lived environments and actively generate social relations and hierarchies, both within a monastic community and between the monastery and the external world.[41]

While this process of inquiry has led me to unexpected places, it also has reaffirmed my belief in the utility of architectural history as a discipline that is rooted in the study of the object, and that begins with a process of close looking and formal analysis. The monasteries that form the heart of this book tell the most compelling stories through the power of their architecture, which are best deciphered through a careful examination of plans, elevations, moldings, door hinges, and ornamental features. These details enlivened interior spaces by creating

meaningful relationships between different rooms, by guiding movements, and by bringing, on occasion, the heavenly into the world of the monastery.

The Centrality of the Guru

Such notions of architecture's agency to articulate and regulate social relations were deeply rooted within Indian textual traditions dating to around the turn of the first millennium. Architectural treatises, such as the *Mānasāra* and *Mayamatam,* include dozens of chapters that rank build types, material objects, and urban patterns according to idealized social hierarchies. Towns, villages, forts, and palaces were carefully differentiated, as were column types and material objects, including bodily ornaments, furniture, and chariots, according to factors such as an inhabitant's caste and occupation. Although the extent to which the prescriptions found in such texts were put into actual practice remains unknown, they suggest an active envisioning of architecture as a medium that could articulate and reinforce a desired social order. At top of the apex was the *cakravartin,* or universal world ruler, the highest ranked of nine idealized classes of kings, each of which was allotted a certain number of soldiers, attendants, courtiers, queens, palaces, forts, and towns, according to his position. Whereas the lowest-ranking king was only allowed two courts in his palace, the cakravartin could have up to seven.[42]

Within the monastery, it was not the king but the guru who stood at the heart of a deeply hierarchical community and who gave it, through his bodily presence, its most central meaning. As a spiritual teacher, the guru presided over larger communities of disciples and devotees. As an administrator, he operated on a worldly level, overseeing transactions at temples and performing initiation (*dīkṣā*), often with the expectation of a material gift (*gurudakṣiṇā*) in return. In inscriptional sources, the term "guru" is frequently used interchangeably with "*ācārya,*" often translated as a "religious preceptor" or "priest." Both conveyed the idea of a "respectable elder" or "teacher" to be worshipped and revered in early Sanskrit sources, and both shared many other overlapping meanings. But, as Minoru Hara has shown, the guru was much more than just a venerable teacher; he was a deeply important person who inspired highly charged emotional responses. Whereas the ācārya, in medieval religious texts, could be a teacher or ritual actor with whom one might or might not have had a close personal connection, the relationship with a guru was based on deep affective bonds; the guru was "an object of honour (*mānana, pūjana*), veneration (*nam-, praṇāma*), sincere devotion (*bhaktī*), and personal attendance (*sevā śuśrūṣā*)."[43] By the turn of the first millennium, the guru had become understood also as a living manifestation of divinity to be emulated, worshipped, and served not only by ascetic disciples, but also by lay communities and royal elites.

As the primary seat of the guru, the monastery can be understood by extension as a sacred house, designed to shelter a holy guru, who was ontologically equivalent to "another Śiva on earth," and his resident disciples, who were following a path toward becoming divine. The basic conception of the monastery as a privileged dwelling is evoked quite effectively in the terminology most often used to describe

Śaiva monastic residences. By far the most common terms used in Mattamayūra inscriptions are "maṭha" (monastery) and "āśrama" (hermitage).[44] While the two terms are sometimes employed as virtual synonyms, more often they are carefully differentiated. Whereas "maṭha" can be translated quite literally as a hut or cottage, a monastery associated with an ascetic, a cloister, or a college, "āśrama" tends to denote a hermitage, an "abode of ascetics," or "the cell of a hermit or of retired saints or sages." The conception underlying both is further connected to that of the *guru-kula*, or literally the "house of a guru" that served as the foundational model for Hindu religious schools from the first millennium BC onward. Śaiva Siddhānta ritual texts also use the terms "*dhāman*," meaning a dwelling place or house, and "*guru-gṛha*," or the guru's house, to describe the residence that new initiates must share with their guru. These latter sets of terms suggest that the Śaiva monastery was particularly understood as the house of the guru, whose bodily presence imbued the space with spiritual significance and meaning. Just like the hermit and monk in earlier India, the medieval Śaiva guru represented the potential for spiritual realization, but he also functioned more potently as a manifestation of god.[45]

This notion is not unusual in an Indic context, where monastic abodes may have been long considered sacred because of the potency of their holy residents. In a posthumously published essay, Ananda Coomaraswamy made a case for seeing the single-celled hermit's hut as the seminal morphological unit underlying the development of sacred architecture, including early Buddhist monasteries (vihāras) and Hindu temples. According to Coomaraswamy's arguments, in the case of the Hindu temple, the body of the hermit was replaced by that of a divinity. In the case of the Buddhist vihāra, the single hermit's hut was replicated and rebuilt as a series of identical residential cells, each of which embodied the potential for enlightenment (see figs. 0.4, 0.5).[46] As Michael Meister has additionally noted, in Coomaraswamy's vision, "The hut of the solitary ascetic collectively becomes the form for the monastery, that the monastery is a collection of individual ascetics in their separate cells which then, arranged around a courtyard becomes the model for the Indian monastery."[47] The potency of the hut lay in its function as a shelter for the body of a holy sage, who acted as a metaphor for spiritual potential and ultimate release. What made the hermit's hut sacred was its status as an embodied architecture—or, in other words, as a building that derived its meaning from the body of the holy figure who dwelt within it. The hermit's hut, as Kazi Ashraf has noted, brought together the two essential components of renuciatory existence—the building and the body—with such intimacy that "the house is homologized with the ascetic's body so that a metaphysical or mystical understanding of the suprahuman figure is embodied in the architecture."[48] In literary descriptions and visual depictions, the hermit's house was a highly charged sensory space that smelled sweetly of perfume and was accompanied by adoring attendants (fig. 0.7).

Although the monasteries examined in this book represent very different approaches to architecture, they can be seen as similarly emerging from the body of the holy practitioner. Instead of the resonance between the individual hermit and his dwelling cell, we find specialized rooms designated for the guru's use and visual viewing points that may have served as spaces for various devotional

FIG. 0.7.
A hermit's hut in a forest landscape (detail), c. 50 BC–AD 50. Detail of a pillar relief depicting the story of the Buddha's conversion of the Uruvelā kaśyapa sages. Great Stūpa, Sanchi.

expressions through *guru-pūjā* (the making of offerings to the guru) and *guru-darśana* (exchanging glances with the guru). Such spaces, as will be discussed in greater detail, retain an indexical relationship with the body of the guru, in that the spaces were literally shaped by the dimensions and movements of the founding guru's body.[49] On an even more fundamental level, the significance of the guru's bodily presence was reinforced through the architectural practices surrounding the construction, and particularly the consecration, of monastic building. From the moment of its creation, the monastery was sanctified through the performance of consecration rituals meant to invest it with divine power. One might argue that this much was true for any domestic architecture, particularly given the elaborate nature of the rituals prescribed for the establishment of any new dwelling. However, the nature of the sources providing instructions for consecrating lay and monastic dwellings are quite distinct. Whereas instructions pertaining to houses, huts, mansions, and palaces are generally treated in texts that functioned primarily as architectural treatises, instructions for inaugurating monasteries, in the few cases where they can be found, are primarily treated in Śiva ritual texts, in sections laying out rules concerning the establishment of larger temple complexes. Although architectural treatises similarly contain sections on temple building, they rarely treat the construction of a monastery, except in passing to mention where it might fit within the structure of a larger town or village plan. Similarly, Śaiva ritual manuals do not concern themselves very often with the subject of domestic architecture or urban planning.[50]

Although detailed prescriptions concerning the consecration of monasteries (*maṭha-pratiṣṭhā*) are not common among the extant corpus of texts, they can be found in a handful of important Śaiva Siddhānta ritual manuals. In the *Somaśambhu-paddhati,* often dated to the eleventh century, the rituals comprising the inauguration of monasteries are covered in its eleventh chapter, which is part of the fourteen chapters included in the section of the text that deals with rituals of consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*). The sequence of events prescribed in the text can be

summarized as follows. The consecration begins in a separate pavilion outside the monastery, within which the presiding guru must complete a rite to install Śiva's presence in a vase or pot (*śivakumbha*). Following that, he is instructed to coat the monastery, inside and out, with cow dung, which was considered an auspicious and purifying substance, and to decorate the entrance with flowers, garlands, and other ornaments. The next step involved a procession during which the guru entered the monastery, accompanied by his disciples and a brāhmaṇa priest employed to carry the vase containing Śiva (śivakumbha) upon his shoulders while chanting Vedic songs. Once the time is right, the patron of the monastery should follow in the procession and enter the building. After the priest deposits the vase in the courtyard (*catusi*), proper homage should be paid to those employed in the site's production: the brāhmaṇas, the astrologer, and the masons, who are given their requisite fees. Once they are dismissed, the guru performs a series of crucial rites to sanctify the actual building. First, facing toward the east, he performs the adoration of the divinities presiding over the site (*vāstupūjā*), through a sacred diagram (*maṇḍala*) measuring two cubits. Then, he directs attention to the pillars, cornice, and roof and makes tribute to the goddess (*śakti*). He then "feeds" the guardians of the directions (*dikpālas*) and guardians of the gate (*dvarapālas*) through a fire sacrifice and makes other offerings of fruit, shells, and finally water from the vase, while speaking the relevant mantras. The guru then concludes with an oral declaration of the name of the monastery and its patron.[51]

Two points can be taken from this ritual of consecration. The first is that the monastery only became habitable after it was established as a place imbued with the god Śiva's presence. The second is that the monastery became activated through the guru's attention to the building's various architectural components and by his movement through the architectural space. Variations on this ritual in later texts reinforce these notions. According to the *Cintyaviśva*, entrance to the monastery was preceded by a circumambulation, which effectively defined the boundaries of the exterior space, before moving inward. By the end of the ceremony, Śiva was understood to be fully installed and present within the space, thereby reinforcing the notion of the monastery as a space within which Śiva himself is perpetually present as a resident. In a chapter detailing the process of renovating an old or neglected monastery, the text dictates that one should bring "all the *liṅgas*" (nonanthropomorphic, and often phallic, icons of Śiva) into the monastery and allow them to dwell there for some time in order to restore functionality.[52]

The ritual of consecration (maṭha-pratiṣṭhā) defined the monastery, from its moment of creation, as a space permeated by the presence of Śiva; at the same time, the sanctity of the monastic space continued to be activated by the potency of the practices conducted by the resident ascetics under the tutelage of the guru. The growing importance of the guru as a revered spiritual teacher can be seen in sculptural representations at sites such as Khajurāho from the tenth century onward. In these, he often appears either as an icon of devotion or seated on an elevated surface, flanked by disciples who sit at his feet and look upward, holding their hands in the gesture of devotion (*añjali mudrā*). The centrality of the guru within the monastic community is particularly well illustrated in a tenth-

FIG. 0.8.
Sculpted scene depicting a guru dispensing instruction (śikṣādāna), c. AD 954. From frieze along the plinth, Lakṣmaṇa temple, Khajurāho.

century relief on the Lakṣmaṇa temple at Khajurāho (fig. 0.8). In it, a guru sits enclosed in a pillared hall (*maṇḍapa*) while demonstrating the correct performance of an intricate ritual involving a woman, who has been identified variously as a dancing girl, temple courtesan, or female devotee. His proficiency at meditation is made particularly clear by the fullness of his belly, which is inflated with *prāṇa*, or sacred breath. Facing him (to the left) are two rows of disciples, one row seated and one standing, while behind him (to the right) are three attendants holding ritual implements, which include a sack of supplies, a bowl, and a large, flat object that may be either a base for a portable icon or a writing tablet.[53]

The details of this relief identify the monastery as a place that, first and foremost, fostered potent ritual practices and the transmission of religious knowledge that emanated from the guru. If we take a closer look, we see that the guru holds up his right hand in the *dharmacakra mudrā*, or the hand gesture indicating that he is caught in the act of teaching, and that his disciples to the left reciprocate with a hand gesture indicating the wish for salvation. The disciples themselves are differentiated by coiffure and facial hair, possibly indicating hierarchies in initiatory status. Those who are seated below are most like the guru: they wear their long, matted hair tied back, and their beards extend down to the upper portion of their chests. They are seated in exactly the same pose as their teacher and may represent students who had received a liberating initiation (nirvāṇadīkṣā), or a level of initiation that would allow them to achieve liberation upon his death. The standing figures may represent newly initiated disciples or younger boys newly brought into the tradition, and are thus seen as cleanly shaven. They are led by a large, bearded figure who holds a staff and sports a massive, prāṇa-filled belly, mirroring that of the guru. He may represent a practitioner initiated at the highest level, someone qualified to be selected as the next head of

the monastery, whose status as such is emphasized through his bodily resemblance to the guru himself. The shifts in bodily representation are quite striking here—as the disciples move up the initiatory ladder and acquire higher ritual status, their bodies become more like that of their head teacher. This is not a surprising development when considering the larger ritual context. As textual scholars have shown, the relationship between guru and disciple—from the moment of initiation onward—was rooted in rituals that were believed to bring about ontological transformations in the body.[54]

The visual resonances between the guru and his disciples in the relief from Khajurāho foreground the importance of the guru's corporeal presence within medieval Indian monasteries in two specific ways. On the one hand, the relief emphasizes that the path to liberation lay in direct bodily imitation of the guru—in the absorption of teachings that were conveyed not only through oral discourses, but also through repetition of physical action. On the other hand, the relief situates the guru's body clearly within a hierarchized architectural space where the guru functioned as a revered religious teacher. By far the largest figure in the group, the guru sits in a privileged position framed by four pillars within a sizable chamber, one that may possibly correspond with a special hall for discourse and learning described in textual sources as the vidyāvyākhyā-maṇḍapa. The function of this kind of chamber can be deduced from Śaiva ritual sources, which prescribe that all members of the monastic community should attend the guru's daily discourse, consisting of recitations and commentaries on sacred texts as well as ritual performance. This daily instruction was a highly ritualized act that was required to take place in a suitable and secure place, a point that was rigidly enforced because the transmission of potent religious knowledge, understood as "true knowledge," was strictly limited to those who were initiated within the guru's tradition. Every day, disciples within the monastery would gather for this discourse, which would begin with the ritual worship of Śiva, Gaṇeśa, and the guru. This act of worship, directed toward both the guru and gods, grew out of a longer range of tradition in which the guru was universally understood by all to be divine. His discourses did not merely offer paths to liberation, but also words of embodied spiritual truth. And the rituals, meditations, and recitations of sacred sounds, or mantras, filled the spaces in which he and his initiates lived with a constant potential for spiritual transformation.[55]

While the representational content of the relief from Khajurāho provides a rich range of visual references to the bodily actions that structured life within the monastic community, the mode of presentation adds yet another layer of meaning. The monastic community as a whole is highly detailed and seemingly in motion, even as its members are caught freeze-frame in the midst of a potent ritual moment. The depth of carving seems to express an intentional desire to push the scene beyond the representational frame. Sculpted almost fully in the round, the figures turn outward at slightly oblique angles and come together at precisely the point of the central ritual action. They project out against their background, even as they are contained between the deeply projecting moldings that frame the scene from above and below. The moldings, in turn, shape the viewer's visual access and bodily entrance into the scene; they situate the scene just above the

level of the eye's peripheral vision, making the audience look upward and inward. This active encounter between audience and object in effect dissolves the cognitive dissonance between worlds inside and outside of the frame of representation, and it opens up a point of entry through which the viewer can become a participant. Differently stated, the relief's presentational mode effectively breaks through its representational surface and closes the gap between the viewer and the performance that is taking place in stone.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that this relief is situated just above eye level in a frieze along the plinth of the temple. A liminal zone in multiple ways, plinths served both as foundations for the sacred architecture that rose from their surfaces and as a kind of boundary between the space directly around the temple and the exterior world. In the case of the Lakṣmaṇa temple at Khajurāho, the frieze includes both highly controversial scenes of royally sponsored orgies and more seemingly generic processions of elephants, horses, and warriors. The relief depicting a guru within his monastery is one among a series of interspersed scenes that seem to carry more specific meanings. Included among this series are scenes of instruction and initiation: we see master artists in the act of instructing pupils, a sculptor and dance teacher, and a master archer. Indeed, it seems that the common denominator pertains to the dissemination of different forms of knowledge, but knowledge that was particularly relevant to royally sponsored temple sites.

The positioning of these images as projecting outward toward the world beyond the temple raises the question of whether the presentational frame can be read as intentionally constructed to evoke the lived communities and activities that animated temple centers. This was indeed a world populated by courtesans and dancers, by sculptors and kings, and, most certainly, by vibrant monastic communities. The significant distinction here is that while the products of training in dance, sculpture, and archery were often visible to a courtly audience, only disciples initiated at particular levels were privy to the kind of instruction disseminated by the guru in the monastery. In this case, an activity that occurred in the interior of a monastic space was rendered visible to a larger audience through its representational and presentational frames. It is, of course, possible that the temple was frequented primarily by members of the royal or courtly elite, and that the expectation would be that they had all received, at the very least, an entry-level initiation.

Both the representational content and presentational manner of this relief raise issues that are at the heart of this book. On the one hand, this book examines a set of buildings that were, at their core, residential teaching institutions intended to house the guru and his disciples and to provide appropriate spaces for training initiates, meditating, practicing yoga, and performing a variety of religious rituals similar in form, if not necessarily in specific detail, to those depicted in the relief from Khajurāho. On the other hand, it is a theoretical and methodological exploration of the ability of architecture and the built environment to participate in complex cultural discourses and to reshape the nature of human experience. It thinks through layers of agency—of the diverse individuals who built, inhabited, and worshipped in and around monastic spaces, and of the buildings themselves. In the course of doing so, this book suggests that architecture's power as a

medium resides in its fundamental intermediality—in the potential for stone walls to reshape the physical space, to engage multiple senses, and to articulate and reinforce social order, ritual relations, and the perceived ontology of the world.

Organization of the Book

The book is organized into six chapters, which unfold as a spatial and methodological journey through the process of encountering monasteries from multiple perspectives—as they would have been approached by their original inhabitants, by colonial archaeologists, and by a present-day scholar exploring new ways of engaging architectural forms. Although each chapter can stand alone, the book is structured in sets of tightly woven pairs. The first two chapters open the book by introducing the historical contexts surrounding the development of new types of monasteries (Chapter 1), while raising critical questions concerning the methodologies and epistemologies that have been brought to bear on both architecture and inscriptional texts (Chapter 2). The next two chapters move toward the life of the monastery and its inhabitants, seen first through the internal structure of the monastic community (Chapter 3) and then through engagement with lay devotional communities at expanding temple sites (Chapter 4). Finally, the last two chapters shift the focus outward to broader social formations, focusing, respectively, on the creation of long-distance monastic networks through increasingly prominent royal patronage (Chapter 5) and the lasting influence and legacy of the monasteries traced in the book (the Epilogue).

Each of these chapters is rooted in a set of case studies of individual monuments or types of sources, which, because of their particular contexts, tell unique parts of this story. Whereas Chapter 1 looks at the role of geography in the determination of larger histories, Chapter 2 investigates the corpus of inscriptions not merely as textual records, but also as material objects rooted in architectural environments. Chapter 3 turns to two monasteries, at Kadwāhā and Ranod, as exemplary buildings representing the parallel development of two distinct types of buildings, one of which functioned as an institutional monastic center (maṭha), and the other of which lent itself more freely to places that held the status of an ascetic retreat (āśrama). In the process, it looks at how monasteries drew their meaning through both the forms of their architecture and through the movements that once animated their now-static spaces. Chapter 4 moves to another pair, at Surwāyā and Terāhī, both of which were not the products of a single moment of building, but which, through fragments of their many histories, tell a highly complex story. In particular, they provide insight into the ways in which monasteries responded to changing circumstances within monastic communities, and to the increasing importance of temples and lay devotional activity at monastic sites.

The last two chapters begin moving toward a conclusion by examining the movement outward and the afterlives of sites. Chapter 5 begins by examining the expansion of monastic networks, by focusing on a single surviving building from a much larger network established in the realm of the prominent Kalachuri kings. Located on the banks of the holy Son River at the site of Chandrehe, this

monastery provides a powerful glimpse of a royally sponsored religious network that was once among the most influential in North and central India, but that remains accessible only in fragments today. The Epilogue brings the book to a conclusion by examining the afterlives of both the monasteries at the center of this book and the places associated with their early development. In some instances, sites continued as monastic centers for many generations; in others, they were converted to radically new uses. In both cases, the evolving activity at monastic sites speaks particularly to the malleability of architectural environments, as well as to the power of architecture to establish an enduring sense of place.

CHAPTER 1

In Search of "Drunken Peacocks"

Mapping Monastic Histories from Forest to State

Once upon a time, an emissary entered into the court of a glorious king named Avantivarman, bringing news of a guru who had been practicing austerities near a place called Upendrapura. "Oh King," said the emissary, "there is a remarkable and venerable sage who shines like the sun with unimaginable greatness near the highest of mountains, spreading light upon all." Hearing this, King Avantivarman became overcome with a desire for religious initiation. He sought out the sage, a guru named Purandara, honored him lavishly, and somehow or other convinced him to return with him to settle in his kingdom. An exchange was made: Purandara performed the ritual of initiation, and Avantivarman offered him a generous gift of the "wealth of his kingdom" by way of a guru's fee (gurudakṣiṇā). With this gift, Purandara established two monasteries. The first was a famed and "prosperous monastery, a fit place for excellent sages . . . in the glorious city known for 'Drunken Peacocks.'" The second was "a forest for austerities," a peaceful hermitage at a place known as Araṇipadra (literally, "wilderness village"), fit for the most stalwart of ascetics deeply invested in quelling their worldly desires and achieving the bliss of liberation through yoga and meditation.[1]

This story of an encounter between an ascetic and a king, told in a monumental inscription still located at the present-day site of Ranod, marks a moment of multiple beginnings. On the one hand, it describes the establishment of two new monasteries on a fairly localized level, deep in the hinterlands of rural Madhya Pradesh. On the other hand, it evokes the foundation of a much larger, transregional religious movement. Purandara's two monasteries spawned a network consisting of dozens of interconnected monastic centers that, by the turn of the eleventh century, ranged far across North and central India and were likely also linked to a wider circuit in the south. The goal of this chapter is to begin mapping out the processes through which the Mattamayūras rose to become one of the more prominent religious lineages in medieval central India. In doing so, it builds upon histories that have been drawn primarily from close readings of inscriptions, by looking also through landscape and geography in order to map the movement of the Mattamayūra sages from their origins in the forested wildernesses to the centers of urbanizing places and royal states. Landscape and geography are crucial elements to bring into the equation, as medieval histories in North and central India have most often been written through the lens of textual sources, which, in turn, have been frequently evaluated far from their original sites.[2] However, both were crucial elements not only in deciphering the physical movement of prominent sages, but also in evaluating a range of broader processes that contributed both to the forging of new political and social relationships and to the making of a powerful mythic imaginaire.

On a practical level, the history that is revealed through the architectural and inscriptional sources is one that begins with the seeming emergence of a localized lineage of sages, felt most powerfully today through fragments of early buildings, datable as early as the eighth and ninth centuries. But the critical moment was in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It was during this period that the Mattamayūras effectively transformed themselves into a major new religious movement headed by prominent and powerful gurus who were actively sought out and patronized

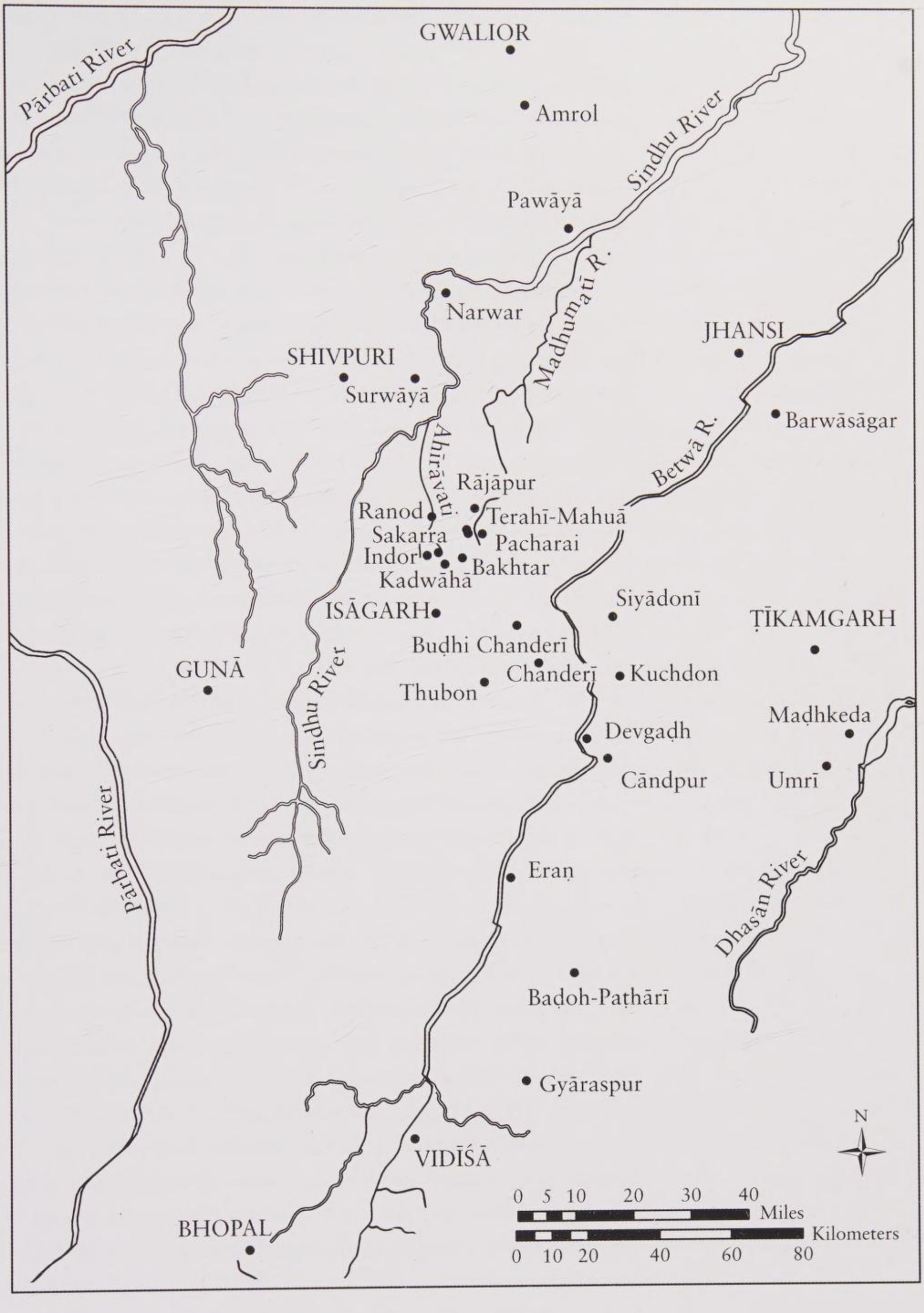
by kings. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they controlled a vast network that stretched across North and central India, and that was beginning to extend southward into Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. While inscriptions provide the basis for mapping geographic locations, the Mattamayūras' success in creating a strong institutional presence was linked more fundamentally to the concurrent establishment of new kinds of monasteries in urban and rural areas. In addition to building large and highly visible dwellings (maṭhas) and ritual retreats (āśramas), Mattamayūra sages actively reshaped their architectural environments through the construction of new temples (*devakula, mandira, prāsāda*), the excavation of elaborate water tanks and step-wells (*kuṇḍa, vāpī*), and the cultivation of gardens. While the architectural transformations will be treated in detail elsewhere in this book, this chapter turns to the role of landscape—as both metaphor and real place—in shaping the processes of institutionalization, through which asceticism transitioned into monasticism, and wandering sages moved from the peripheries of the forest to the centers of royal states.

Foundations in the Forests of Gopakṣetra

From their very first emergence, the monasteries of the Mattamayūras can be understood as deeply engaged with their environments on multiple scales. Although they spanned a wide geography, they were particularly connected with two core geographic regions currently subsumed within the present-day state of Madhya Pradesh. The first was ancient Gopakṣetra, often associated with the princely state of Gwalior, and the second was the ancient region of Ḍāhaladeśa, associated with the powerful Kalachuri kingdom, located two kingdoms over to the east (see fig. 0.6). Although consecutive in terms of historical appearance, the monasteries in the two regions also represent a simultaneity of events: the moment that saw the consolidation of the Mattamayūra network in Gopakṣetra also saw the expansion of the lineage to Kalachuri lands. Nonetheless, the histories of the monasteries in the two regions, while connected, remained distinct, largely on account of variations in their patronage and institutional status. Whereas the Mattamayūra sites in Gopakṣetra represent a relatively autonomous religious movement in a fairly remote region, those in the territory of the Kalachuris became firmly attached to courtly life and state affairs.

While the region of Ḍāhaladeśa is fairly well known because of its association with the Kalachuris, the region of Gopakṣetra as a whole is one that has been woefully understudied. Bound largely by the Betwā, Pārvatī, and Chambal rivers, Gopakṣetra presents many challenges, not the least of which is the fact that its history and geography have never quite adhered to typical narratives of political conquest and regional rule (fig. 1.1). Unlike the neighboring regions of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand) to the east, Dāśārṇa to the south, and Mālavā to the west, Gopakṣetra does not find frequent mention in Sanskrit records as a distinct geographic region until the tenth and eleventh centuries, when it appears in conjunction with the rise of the Kacchapaghāta royal dynasty. The Kacchapaghātas, however, were largely rooted in the north of the region, with

FIG. 1.1.
Map of sites in southern Gopakṣetra.



primary seats at the political center of Gwalior, known then as Gopādri or Gopagiri, and at Sihoniyā, home of the glorious yet largely destroyed Kakanmaṭh temple (attributed to Kirttirāja, reigned 1015–35), and with secondary branches at Narwar and Dubkund. Unlike their better-known neighbors—the Paramāras of Mālavā or the Chandellas of Jejākabhukti, who consolidated cohesive and extensive regional kingdoms—the Kacchapaghātas were unlikely to have extended direct control over the entirety of the region.[3]

In its earliest stages, the Mattamayūra network consisted of a tightly knit cluster of sites situated in a remote but fertile subregion of southern Gopakṣetra. Watered primarily by the ancient Madhumatī and Ahīrāvati tributaries of the larger Sindhu River, the Mahuār River region, as it has sometimes been dubbed, extended between Pawāyā (ancient Padmāvatī) and later Narwar to the north and Buḍhi Chanderī to the south. A long way from Gwalior, the royal seat of power, the first monastic sites within the Mahuār River region were contained within a 25-mile (40-kilometer) area, the equivalent of a one- or two-day journey by foot. Despite its remote geography, the Mahuār River region was richly endowed with natural resources. In addition to the tracts of arable land weaving between the flowing rivers and streams, the dense forest provided plenty of wood, and the rocky outcroppings are dotted with the remains of metal slag and stone mines that can still be seen in the field today.[4]

This richly rural landscape likely provided an idyllic setting for monastic practice, as it possessed all the traits of a natural pilgrimage place (*tīrtha*), where the presence of the divine was strongly felt. It is well known that rivers, and particularly the confluence of two or more bodies of water, are often considered holy in Indic traditions. That the confluence of the rivers Sindhu and Madhumatī was already a sacred tīrtha by the eighth century can be attested through its appearance in the drama *Mālatīmādhava,* composed by the famed court poet Bhavabhūti. In beautiful Sanskrit verses, Bhavabhūti praised the spot as sanctified by a Śiva-liṅga shrine situated at the junction. Thus, it is not surprising to find small temples appearing along the tributaries of the Sindhu River starting around the seventh and eighth centuries, notably at the sites of Mahuā, Indor, Sakarra, and Baktar. Śaiva monasteries soon followed, as ascetics, drawn by the auspiciousness of the landscape, began to establish formal monastic communities.[5]

While the auspicious landscape may have drawn the attention of ascetics seeking potent places for religious ritual, it may have also been alluring for other, more worldly reasons. Just as the Mahuār River region remained beyond the boundaries of larger tenth-century kingdoms, it similarly functioned as a wilderness (*aṭavi* or *āraṇya*) during the era of the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras, who had controlled many of the larger urban areas across North and central India in the ninth and tenth centuries. In general, such wildernesses formed the counterpart to early historical states (*janapadas*), often offering much greater flexibility for social mobility and nonorthodox religious practices, while also providing conditions for the development of new forms of settlements. The potential for social mobility and nonorthodox practices may certainly have been a factor in the development of new Śaiva lineages, at the same time as it may have also appealed

to a range of local chiefs and aspirant rulers who became the Mattamayūras' first royal patrons.[6]

This much seems to have been the case for the guru Purandara, who established two new monasteries, at Araṇipadra and Mattamayūra, through King Avantivarman's patronage. Within the corpus of inscriptions, these two establishments appear to have formed a foundation of sorts. They are the first two monasteries described as having been actively erected by a living sage and through royal patronage, and they seem to indicate the establishment not merely of a monastery but also of the beginnings of a larger network. The narrative, however, raises as many questions as it appears to answer. Neither Avantivarman nor Purandara have been particularly easy to locate in the historical landscape, and both have given rise to scholarly debate. The same is true of the place described as Mattamayūra, which posed an insoluble puzzle for F. Kielhorn when he first encountered the term in 1892, but has been conjecturally equated, on numerous occasions, with the modern-day village of Kadwāhā. Only Araṇipadra is fairly simple: it is unequivocally the ancient name of Ranod, or the site at which the story is initially told. The difficulty in locating Purandara has to do with his place of origin. The inscription at Ranod tells us that, prior to his recruitment by King Avantivarman, he was practicing austerities on the Uttama mountain not far from a town or city named Upendrapura, which may have been identical to a district (maṇḍala) of the same name in ancient Mālavā. But Upendrapura, as R. N. Misra has suggested, may also be a pun on "Indra-pura." If this were the case, Indra-pura may be identical with any number of places that today are called Indor, including a small village not far from Kadwāhā and Ranod at which the remains of a monastery can still be seen today (see fig. 1.1).[7]

Avantivarman himself poses another set of difficulties, since his dynasty is never definitively named in Mattamayūra inscriptions. It has been suggested on many occasions that he may have been a member of a ruling family with genealogical ties to the Caulukya royal family, which is also described in Kalachuri-era inscriptions. He seems to have been the ancestor of a king named Avanivarman, whose daughter's marriage to the Kalachuri king Yuvarājadeva I may have stimulated the Mattamayūras' eventual movement eastward in the tenth century. On the basis of inscriptional evidence, V. V. Mirashi proposed a genealogy that situated Avantivarman as a progenitor of what eventually became a tenth-century central Indian royal family known from other epigraphs. The question of where Avantivarman may have been located in the ninth century is another matter entirely. Here the possible connection to ancient Mālavā may be particularly alluring, as the name "Avantivarman" itself simply means "the lord of the region of Avanti"—another name for Mālavā, which, as has been already noted and will also be seen in greater detail in the next chapter, was a region likely populated by branches of the Mattamayūra sect.[8]

In all likelihood, however, Avantivarman was likely rooted in the area around the monastery at Ranod. Inscriptional sources indicate that the place called Mattamayūra may have been associated with his ruling family, and it would make sense for his initiating guru to settle somewhere within his realm. Described in the

inscription as *śrimatpure*, or a grand city, Mattamayūra has been taken by some scholars to have been Avantivarman's capital city. Despite the suggestions that Mattamayūra may have been equivalent to Kadwāhā, it seems more likely to have been located elsewhere, with the most likely candidate being the monastic site at the present-day village of Terāhī.[9]

Although the absence of inscriptional evidence makes definitive corroboration impossible, two factors suggest that Mattamayūra and Terāhī may have been one and the same. The first is the clear association between the Mattamayūras and the Madhumatī River in Kalachuri inscriptions, so much so that the lineage itself is named as both Mattamayūra and Mādhumateya. Of the surviving monasteries, this reference to the Madhumatī River can only point to Terāhī, as the other monasteries in the region were located closer to the Ahīrāvati. The second is the fact that the monastery at Terāhī not only dates back to either the eighth or ninth century but also was, at the time of its foundation, likely an outgrowth of the older settlement of Mahuā. Most significantly, Mahuā remains the one place for which there is clear evidence of earlier royal patronage, by a local lord named Vatsarāja, who, in the seventh century, built a Śiva temple at Mahuā in order to increase the religious merit of his parents. Vatsarāja himself remains an unknown figure, although it has been suggested that he may have had some connection also to the region of Avanti, or ancient Mālāva, and more specifically to the Śaiva center at Ujjain. While this much remains conjecture, in the seventh and eighth century, Mahuā not only can be linked to royal activity, but it also functioned as the most significant settlement along the Madhumatī River. That the monastery at Terāhī was conceived of as an outgrowth of Mahuā at the time of its establishment in the eighth or ninth century is born out through geography, and through the simple fact that Terāhī's monastery was founded directly on a north–south axis with Vatsarāja's earlier Śiva temple (fig. 1.2).[10]

In addition to providing a royal context for the emergence of new monastic institutions, the appearance of local lords, such as Vatsarāja in the seventh century and Avantivarman in the ninth century, also herald a gradual transition that comes to the fore in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Up until that moment, the Mattamayūras appear to have developed strong monastic networks that occasionally found support among local kings. But at some point in the tenth century, the Mattamayūras captured the attention of a more prominent ruling family in the region, a former feudatory of the Gūrjara Pratīhāras, seated not far to the south at Buḍhi Chanderī. These Pratīhāra kings patronized Mattamayūra gurus residing at Kadwāhā, stimulating both the development of Kadwāhā into a veritable temple town and the renovations and expansions of older monasteries at Ranod, Terāhī, and Surwāyā. Finally, around the turn of the eleventh century, a Mattamayūra sage named Prabodhaśiva left his residence at Kadwāhā to establish a new āśrama at Buḍhi Chanderī—in the process creating a firm connection between the older network and the new royal capital.[11]

The increased royal sponsorship of the Mattamayūras and the growth of their base in southern Gopakṣetra may have attracted interest from other regional rulers. The most prominent of these were the Kalachuris of Tripurī, a major dynasty

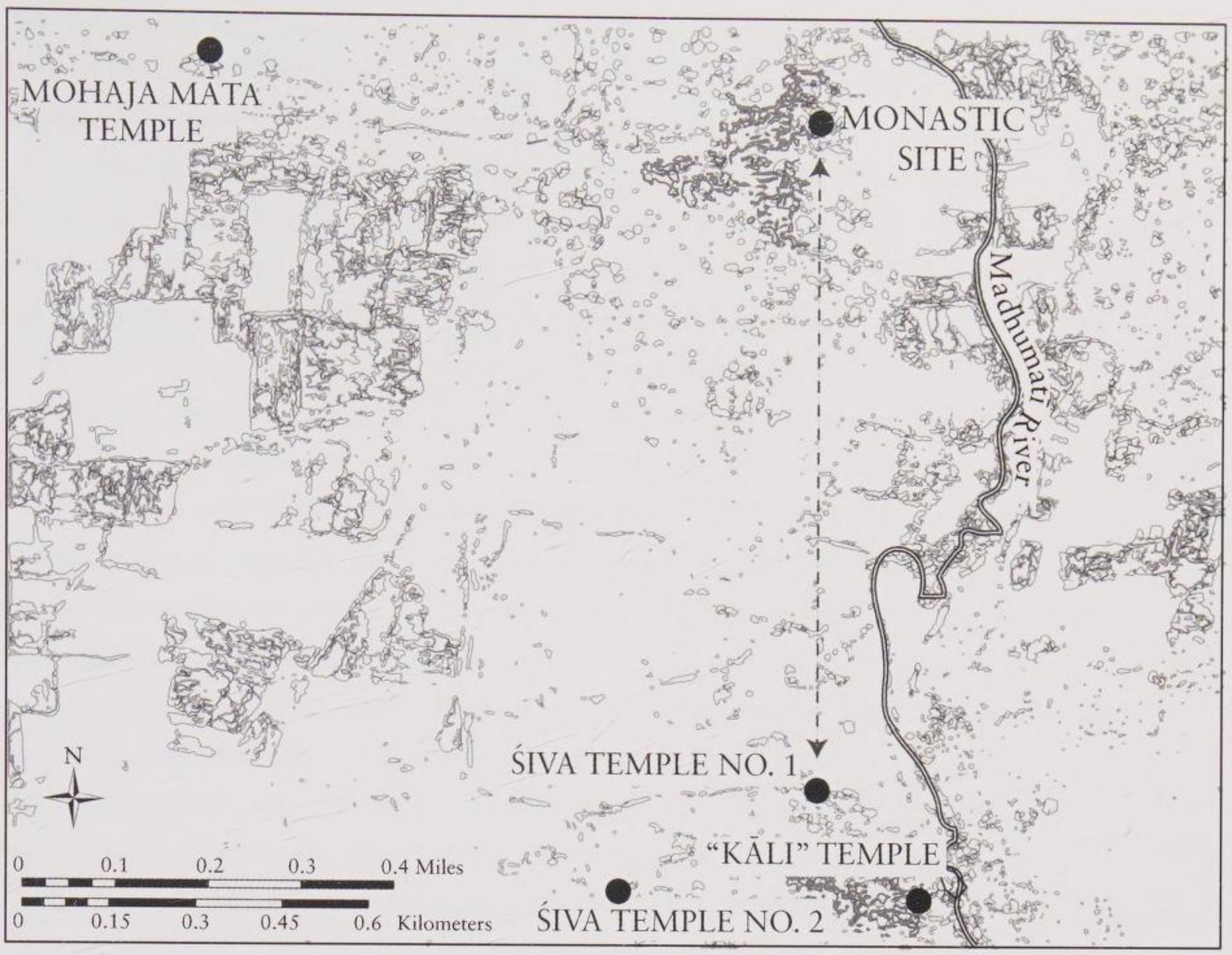


FIG. 1.2.
Map of monuments in the villages of Mahuā and Terāhī.

that managed to consolidate a vast regional kingdom in Ḍāhaladeśa, the eastern part of the present-day state of Madhya Pradesh. The rise of the Kalachuris, and particularly the consolidation of the kingdom under Yuvarājadeva I (reigned AD 915–945), coincided quite significantly with the Mattamayūras' movement eastward. It was Yuvarājadeva I who recruited the sage Prabhāvaśiva, the first Mattamayūra guru to come to the Kalachuri kingdom, to take residence at a royally sponsored monastery at Gurgī. King Yuvarājadeva's contemporaries and successors followed his lead and continued to support the Mattamayūras as they expanded to other sites. His wife, Nohalā, invited the sage Īśvaraśiva to a monastery at Bilhāri; their son, Lakṣmaṇarāja, recruited the sage Hṛdayaśiva to take over two maṭhas, described in inscriptions as Vaidyanātha and Nauhaleśvara. Meanwhile, the sage Prabhāvaśiva moved eastward from Gurgī to found a new monastery at Chandrehe. By the turn of the eleventh century, through the systematic recruitment of Mattamayūra sages and the support and patronage of new monasteries, the Kalachuri kings built a strong network of sites that functioned less as ascetic retreats than as fully urbanizing sacred centers (see figs. 0.6 and 5.1).[12]

While the Kalachuris clearly benefited from their close association with an increasingly prominent religious order, the Mattamayūras' movement to the Kalachuri kingdom also marked a significant shift in their institutional status. Whereas before they had occupied relatively remote hermitages located deep in the forests and outside the purview of royal states, at this point their monasteries became major urban fixtures, located in cities and towns. They were given the authority to officiate over royal decrees, administer land, collect taxes on goods in the marketplace, and perform important rituals. Most important of all were

the revered sages who rose to the status of *rājaguru,* or religious preceptor to the king. Seated in the royal capital of Tripurī, the Mattamayūras who served as rājagurus found themselves not only directly in the center of royal affairs, but also in a position of unprecedented power, both in terms of their close relationship with kings and in terms of their relationship with other religious groups. Once on the fringe of an established Hindu orthodoxy, the Mattamayūras, like many Śaiva Siddhānta groups, had fully and functionally entered the political, social, and religious mainstream.[13]

Worldly Power and the Cultivation of Kings

While the movement from forest to state may have endowed the Mattamayūras with vast scope for expansion and greater societal reach, it may have also marked a certain loss of autonomy afforded by residence in more remote locations. The inscriptional record is particularly striking in this respect, as it reveals ways in which relationships with royalty were carefully negotiated, and certainly more flexible, in Gopakṣetra than in the Kalachuri kingdom. Particularly striking is a shift in authorship or, at the very least, in the status of the commissioning agent. Whereas most of the inscriptions in the Kalachuri kingdom were commissioned by monarchs or queens, in southern Gopakṣetra they most often were produced through the agency of sages.

In southern Gopakṣetra, more often than not, the gurus themselves functioned as active participants in their transactions with royal patrons, and in some cases they may have wielded more political and military power than their patrons. One particularly pertinent example can be found in an encounter between a sage named Dharmaśiva and a chief named Gobhaṭa, described in a tenth-century inscription from the monastery at Kadwāhā. What can be reconstructed of the surviving text can be synthesized as follows. A king named Gobhaṭa came to the hermitage (āśrama) at Kadwāhā with an army of furious elephants. The following text is fragmentary, so it is unclear whether Gobhaṭa came to obtain the guru's aid after having been attacked, or whether he came to attack the monastery, causing the death of the sage. Regardless, the inscription tells us: "Having heard his story, (the guru) shed tears released out of compassion, just for a moment, after which his (eyes) became very red with anger . . . like a cloud (flashing with lightning). Then he, that Śiva on earth, blazing, having (conjured) a bow and arrows obtained by his might, became like (the god) Śiva in his form as the destroyer of the three cities. . . . Having conquered the entire collection of enemies, he was showered with flowers by the lovely attendants of the lord of the gods."[14]

One of the primary implications of this encounter is that the Mattamayūras may have been trained in the martial arts. If so, they may have functioned as warrior ascetics, who, as was the case in other eras and places on the Indian subcontinent, were instrumental in shaping politics and structuring societal relationships in rural areas. R. N. Misra has particularly advocated for a reading of the Mattamayūras as spiritual warriors, noting that the record makes it clear that the Mattamayūras were not only sages but also well-trained warrior saints.

Citing inscriptional allusions to "prancing tall horses" and "roaring rutting elephants," Misra has suggested that the monastery itself functioned as an "arsenal of weapons."[15]

While such references are highly suggestive, we must remember that not all conquest was military, and even these may have been meant to evoke a different kind of battle, one that was waged not through might but through spiritual power. Mattamayūra sages were often praised for being like Śiva in obtaining victory over Kāmadeva, or the god of love, who was reduced to ashes. Similarly, horses, elephants, chariots, and actual warriors were often present at the monastery during ceremonies of royal initiation and at the postinitiatory consecration of kings before critical military campaigns. In this vein, it is significant that Śaiva gurus could perform rituals that were believed to have the potency to destroy armies from afar and endow royal patrons with unimaginable assistance in achieving victory in battle. In this case, more specifically, Richard Davis has suggested that this event can be seen as a "magical vendetta" carried out by a "weaponless ascetic."[16] In either case, Dharmaśiva's encounter with Gobhaṭa subverts the notion that religious communities were always revered by rulers and subject to the authority of traditional states. Rather, it supports the notion that the pontiffs of Mattamayūra monasteries may have been more powerful on occasion than their patron rulers.

The encounter between Dharmaśiva and Gobhaṭa forms only a short section in a longer inscription with the ultimate purpose of recording the forging of a different kind of relationship—that of guru and pupil—between the resident sage and another local king. The story, which also is unfortunately fragmented, can be recounted as follows. One day, a king named Harirāja went to see the Mattamayūra guru, whose name has been lost, at Kadwāhā, because he wished to receive a Śaiva initiation. After the king paid homage and bowed down to the sage, the sage asked, "Who is this long-lived king?" The king's head attendant replied: "There is a gotra of the Pratīhāra kings, white like the moon, which is the source of virtuous people, in which there was a king called 'Durbhaṭa'. . . whose lotus feet were attached to the circle of the crest jewels of . . . fierce cloud of the roaring Gūrjjaras. . . . Like the moon, [the king] removes the affliction of his subjects . . . and (destroyed) his own enemies."[17] Upon hearing this, the guru performed the appropriate Śaiva initiation (dīkṣa), the king provided him with an appropriate gift (gurudakṣiṇā), and the guru sealed the exchange by bestowing a special blessing upon the king.

Several points in this story provide more specific insight into the bond between kings and Mattamayūra gurus. First, King Harirāja specifically approached the guru in his place of residence for the purpose of receiving Śaiva initiation, not unlike the case of Purandara. Initiation would have situated the king at the apex of a larger religious community. Second, prior to conveying initiation, the guru insisted upon knowing the king's family lineage, or *gotra*. This insistence implies that the resident sage may have conferred a special initiation appropriate only for kings. But it also resonates with the guru's authority to legitimate or reinforce a king's claims to *kṣatriya*, or ruling caste, status. Although Harirāja

traced his descent from the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras, in truth, his family emerged as vassals to the mightier kings. It may have been that the act of initiation was also an act of caste conversion, as was the case for the rising Rajput Guhila dynasty, whose status as a kṣatriya and a Rajput was conferred by a sage of the Pāśupata Śaiva sect named Hāritarāśi. A thirteenth-century epigraph eulogizes the sage and records the act, which effectively gave rise to the lineage as a whole: "Assuredly from Brahmā-like Hārita (Hāritarāśi-sage) Bāppaka obtained in the shape of an anklet, the lustre of a Kṣatriya and gave the sage his own devotion, his own *brāhmaṇical* lustre. Thus even till now, the descendants of that line shine on this earth. Like Kśatriyahood in human form."[18]

Harirāja's own family, in earlier generations, did not claim status as independent kings, but rather as feudatory lords (*mahāsāmanta, sāmanta*) under the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras. Harirāja was the first to declare himself fully independent, using lofty titles such as "emperor among kings" (*nṛpacakravarttī*) and "king among kings" (*mahārājādhirāja*) in his inscriptions.[19] Given the fact that the Pratihāras of Buḍhi Chanderī remain relatively unknown in prominent chronicles and surveys of ruling dynasties, Harirāja's use of that title most likely reveals far more about his aspirations than about the real extent of his power. Nonetheless, the fact that the head Mattamayūra guru at the monastery at Kadwāhā affirmed familial dynastic descent through the act of initiation may have had the effect of reaffirming the Pratīhāras' locally perceived status as important rulers in southern Gopakṣetra.[20]

As in most royal exchanges, the gift (gurudakṣiṇā) conferred upon the Mattamayūras by their new royal patrons often came in the form of villages, and in fact gifts of land appear to have been the preferred form of payment. In the case of the Ranod inscription, the king's gift was simply described as "wealth of his own kingdom," which implies a gift in the form of a land grant. In the case of Harirāja, however, this fact is made even more explicit by the inscription, which informs us that "upon receiving initiation, Harirāja offered elephants to the sage as a Guru's fee." However, "although the king gave [this gift] with devotion, and [the sage] was pleased [by it], [the sage] refused. When asked repeatedly what he desired, [the sage] smiled and requested villages."[21] While elephants, symbols of royalty and high prestige in ancient India, were a generous and noble gift, the gift of land could serve as a perpetual source of revenue. Such gifts were therefore a much more practical commodity for a monastic community, and the king appears to have been more than happy to comply with this request. What this story most clearly reveals is the complexity of the gurudakṣiṇā as a highly negotiated act on the part of a king seeking both social and soteriological effects, and on the part of a guru committed to sustaining his monastic community, even as he was participating in the worldly affairs of kings.

Although the granting of the guru's fee appears as a culminating moment, it is unlikely that it marked a final transaction between king and sage. Instead, the inscription concludes with a powerful blessing bestowed by the Mattamayūra guru upon his royal disciple. Although no more is known about the nature of this benediction, it may have been commensurate with an important ritual frequently

performed by the rājaguru just after bestowing initiation upon a king. Described by Alexis Sanderson as "a specially modified version of the Śaiva consecration ritual (*abhiṣekaḥ*)," it functioned "as an empowerment to rule beyond that conferred by the conventional brāhmaṇical royal consecration (*rājyābhiṣekaḥ*)."[22] Such a consecration represents an encroachment of Śaiva officiants in an area of ritual performance that had been traditionally a monopoly of brāhmaṇas, and it signaled a more significant shift in the relationship between religious institutions and the state—a shift through which Śaiva Siddhānta began usurping and perhaps even surpassing the older brāhmaṇical practices as the primary means through which political authority was legitimated.[23] In the case of the Mattamayūras at Kadwāhā, it is clear that the guru had become, through the act of initiation, a rājaguru who was officially tied to the structure of the Pratīhāra state at Buḍhi Chanderī.

The Monastery as Religious History

In addition to signaling a significant shift in the political geography of central India, the history of monastic architecture also indexed the proliferation and institutionalization of new Śaiva religious groups over the course of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. Textual sources frequently separate these Śaiva groups into four distinct streams: Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kāpālika, and Kālāmukha. The Mattamayūras' adherence to the former, also known as Śaiva Siddhānta, is made clear in their inscriptions, which make frequent reference to Mattamayūra preceptors as being "well versed in the Śaivas" or in the "Śaiva Siddhāntas."[24] By contrast, the Pāśupatas, the best known of whom were the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas, named after the ascetic teacher Lakulīśa, followed the *Pāśupata Sūtras;* the Kāpālikas adhered to the texts of the Kaula traditions; and the Kālāmukhas followed in the Pāśupata's footsteps and looked to Pāśupata texts. Of these, the Pāśupatas are most likely the oldest, and they may have been around as a significant ascetic order as early as the second century AD. The Kāpālikas, however, appeared not long after; references to Kāpālika ascetics begin appearing in Prakrit and Sanskrit poetry as early as the third through fifth centuries AD. The Śaiva Siddhāntins were somewhat later and likely formulated during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, first in Kaśmīr and later in southern India. The Kālāmukhas are by far the latest of the groups; they do not appear to have had a significant presence until the eleventh, twelfth, and early thirteenth centuries, although certain Kālāmukha priesthoods were in existence by the early ninth century.[25]

These four Śaiva traditions were distinct from one another in terms of their specific forms of practice, theological bases, and levels of societal engagement. The Pāśupatas, for example, were part of what was known as the *atimārga,* or the "higher" path intended only for ascetics intent on salvation, and they were well known for their purposeful cultivation of antisocial behavior as a means of intensifying their separation from proper society. The Kāpālikas and the Śaiva Siddhāntins both belonged to the *mantramārga,* literally the "path of mantras," which provided a counterpoint to the atimārga by cultivating the participation of both ascetics and householders, and by including rituals that could be used to

obtain both worldly pleasures (*bhoga*) and magical powers (*siddhis*). But, while the Śaiva Siddhāntins upheld orthoprax ideals of purity, the Kāpālikas, or "skull men," glorified ferocious deities and advocated that practitioners transcend attachment to the world through repulsive actions such as the consumption of impure substances and engagement in sexualized rituals. They kept a vow, called the Mahāvrata, that required that they wield a staff topped by a skull, in imitation of Śiva's great penance for the killing of a brāḥmaṇa. The Kālāmukhas, who have often been wrongly conflated with the Kāpālikas in scholarly literature, were also keepers of vows. But they were also part of the atimārga and had much more in common with the Pāśupatas than the Kāpālikas in terms of their ritual practice.[26]

Despite their differences, all four groups can be understood as offering alternatives to the brāhmāṇical Hinduism that had dominated elite culture for at least a millennium, and they thus often fall within the larger category of non-Purāṇic, or nonorthodox, Śaivism.[27] All had a fundamentally ascetic base, and all taught highly secret and powerful rituals that could lead to a state of achieving oneness with Śiva as the ultimate godhead, or of becoming divine like Śiva. Their members were, in most cases, renunciants who practiced a path toward a powerful spiritual liberation that could be obtained not through caste status or birth but through a liberating initiation performed by a guru. In this sense, they were among a larger range of esoteric religious groups that were proliferating during the latter part of the first millennium AD. Many are often considered by scholars today to fall within the larger category of Tantra, which has often been problematically equated with sexualized ritual practices in the popular imagination. However, what differentiated them most clearly from their brāhmaṇical contemporaries were the rites and systems of belief laid out in their textual sources, most of which described themselves as *tantras* ("thread" or "strand") or *Āgamas* ("that which has come down").[28]

In the case of the Mattamayūras, inscriptions inevitably point to the *Āgama* texts more broadly associated with Śaiva Siddhānta, which may have been formulated at some point during the sixth or seventh centuries, but which were increasingly systematized shortly after the turn of the first millennium. These were understood as direct revelation originating from the god Śiva himself and were positioned self-consciously outside the Vedic tradition. Eventually canonized as a cohesive body of 28 primary "root" texts (*mūlāgama*) and 197 subsidiary texts, the *Śaiva Āgamas* broke the religious system down into four categories or foundations, literally referred to as "four feet" (*catuṣpāda*), each of which dealt with a different aspect of ritual: knowledge (*jñana*), ritual action (*kriyā*), meditation (yoga), and proper conduct (*caryā*). Whereas knowledge could lead to a form of being like god (*sāyujya*), action brought about a nearness to god (*sāmīpya*), yoga helped to attain the form of god (*sārūpya*), and good conduct ensured that the soul could attain residence in the region of god (*sālokya*). Of these, the sections on action and conduct are the most useful in thinking through monasteries. Whereas the *Caryāpada* described the rules of behavior expected of residents initiated at various levels, the *Kriyāpāda* laid out the rules concerning the core rituals of the Śaiva Siddhāntins. The *Kriyāpāda* often further differentiated between rituals that were to be performed on a daily basis (*nityakarman*) and

those that were to be performed either periodically, such as during festivals, or occasionally, such as in special consecrations and initiations. Also important were texts known as *paddhatis*, which were written by prominent religious teachers or gurus with the intention of creating encyclopedic compilations of the proper procedures for Śaiva rituals. As a result, the authors of paddhatis drew directly from older scriptures, incorporating not merely the content but also the precise wording of their sources.[29]

The world that emerges through these texts has been evocatively characterized by Richard Davis as oscillating and permeated by the god Śiva, whose presence became manifest through a daily ritual reenactment of the process of cosmic emission and absorption—or the cyclical creation and destruction of the cosmos as a whole.[30] In this world, the individual soul (*paśu*) was understood to exist in a perpetual bondage, bound by fetters (*pāśa*) that can only be broken through the grace of the ultimate godhead (*pati*), in this case Śiva, as the primary lord or Īśvara. Śaiva Siddhāntins believed in the inherent "Śiva-ness" (*śivatva*) of the soul, which, once the fetters of ignorance (*anava*), impurities accumulated through action (*karma*), and illusion (*maya*) were broken, could emerge as a fully manifest emulation of the god himself. However, unlike many contemporary Śaiva traditions that posited a monist vision of ultimate reality, Śaiva Siddhānta was strictly dualist in that it conceived of the individual soul as fundamentally separate from that of the universal godhead. Alexis Sanderson has most succinctly summarized the Śaiva Siddhānta belief:

> (i) That Śiva as the omnipotent and omniscient efficient cause (*nimittakāraṇam*) of the universe is other than its matter (*upādānam*), the world (the sum of the evolutes of this matter) being entirely distinct from the consciousness of Śiva and of all other sources, and (ii) that these other souls never lose their individual identity even in the state of final release (*mokṣaḥ*).[31]

This ontological separation between Śiva and individual beings was carried through the theology of the system, which dictated that "every animate being, beginning with Śiva, has a soul, whose principal characteristic is 'consciousness' (*cit*) . . . [which] . . . in turn, manifests itself through . . . the power to know (*jñānaśakti*) and the power to act (*kriyāśakti*)."[32]

The key to liberation in Śaiva Siddhānta, as in most Śaiva traditions, was a combination of knowledge (jñāna) and ritual action (kriyā) that, from the moment of initiation, acted directly and ontologically at the level of the soul. The first step was to break the fetters that kept the soul in bondage by receiving a type of initiation known as nirvāṇadīkṣā, or a "liberating initiation." During the course of the ritual, the guru acted as a vessel for Śiva, who then became the true agent in the conference of initiation. Acting through the guru, Śiva entered the body of the initiate through the flow of his breath and enacted a complete transformation of the initiate's soul. The ritual itself was comprised of a process of visualization, through which first the soul was unified with Śiva and drawn out of the initiate's body; then the body itself was cleared of all purifications; and, finally, the soul was returned and the body remade

into a "body of powers"—parallel to Śiva's own body. The transformation, simply put, turned the body of the practitioner from "an objectification of the soul's fetters into an instrument of the soul's intrinsic powers."[33] Thus the ritual of nirvāṇadīkṣā worked through the body, but it acted directly on the soul to effectively "burn up" the impurities (particularly of karma), removing them completely and allowing the true nature of the soul to emerge. In the process, it also created an immutable bond, not only between the initiate and the god Śiva, but also between the officiating guru and the recipient pupil, who was then required to follow a daily regimen of ritual actions (nityakarman) in order to eradicate any remaining impurities and protect against the accumulation of new ones.[34]

Although Śaiva Siddhānta likely originated in the realm of ascetic practice, by the tenth century, Śaiva Siddhānta was rapidly becoming mainstream. This process was expedited through royal patronage, not only in South India, as is well known today, but also in many areas of North and central India, where its history has been largely forgotten. Śaiva Siddhānta's relative success at attracting royal patronage and institutional support was rooted in a number of distinct factors, not the least of which was the relative inclusiveness of the system. Unlike in more orthodox brāhmaṇical practices, where access to ritual was restricted to privileged castes, Śaiva Siddhānta was open to a range of social communities, including members of the lowest castes, and it offered a relative degree of flexibility. Different forms of initiation and ritual paths were available for a range of different categories of practitioner, including lay householder families and the most resolute of renunciants. Additionally, aspirants could choose to follow one of two distinct paths, the first of which was aimed toward achieving eventual liberation (mokṣah), and the second of which led to the acquisition of worldly, and often magical, powers (siddhis). Those who followed the first path were known as mumukṣu, or "desirous of liberation," and those who followed the second path, often referred to as mantra-adepts or sorcerers (sādhakas), were understood as bubhukṣu, or "desirous of worldly pleasures."[35]

One of the most influential factors underlying the success of Śaiva Siddhānta in garnering popular appeal may have been its emphasis on temple worship. Śaiva Siddhānta texts, particularly from the turn of the first millennium, paid particular attention to subjects that fell under the headings of action (kriyā) and behavior conduct (cārya), or the sections in ritual texts that emphasize external ritual performances. This was a decided shift both from earlier Śaiva Siddhānta and contemporary esoteric Non-Dualist textual traditions, which emphasized internalized practices and metaphysical knowledge associated with meditation (yoga) and knowledge (jñāna). The increasing emphasis on kriyā and cārya translated into a proliferation of temple building activity and rituals associated with the installation of images, temple worship, ceremonial bathing, public festivals, and other externalized acts, in addition to new expositions of cosmogony, mantra creation, and other theoretical matters. While yoga and jñāna remained important for the highest level of practitioners—represented by the sages residing within a monastery—kriyā and cārya opened up new avenues for participation across a broader spectrum of society.[36]

The widespread foundation of monumental temples and the production of both stone and bronze images can be seen at many famous sites, including those of the famed Cholas in South India and the Chandellas of Khajurāho. Exactly contemporary to Khajurāho and Thanjavur, but under the purview of the Mattamayūras, were sites such as Kadwāhā, which contains the remains of no fewer than fifteen temples dating between the ninth and eleventh centuries, in addition to its Śaiva maṭha. It is reasonable to assume that many of these building projects were undertaken following Śaiva Siddhānta prescriptions and likely under the supervision of a Śaiva Siddhānta guru. Unfortunately, Śaiva Siddhānta ceased to play a significant role in North and central India in later centuries. However, texts from this period remain the fundamental authority on temple worship in many parts of southern India today.[37]

The Consolidation of a Tradition

The history of Mattamayūra monastic sites over the longer *durée* coincides quite closely with both the emergence of Śaiva Siddhanta as a consolidated religious system and its integration within larger royal states. Although every site was subject to extensive building and rebuilding during the tenth and eleventh centuries, several still retain fairly substantial traces of earlier eighth- and ninth-century phases, likely coinciding with the monastery's original establishment. The eighth- and ninth-century origins are significant in terms of the broader architectural and inscriptional records. It was during the seventh and eighth centuries that Śaiva temples began to appear with increasing frequency across the subcontinent, often under the auspices of royal patronage, both at places known primarily to regional specialists as well as ones that remain famous today, such as Ellora, Bhubaneśvara, and Mamallapuram. Among the most visible were temple sites associated with the Pāśupatas, which are easily identifiable through the appearance of the sect's founding guru, Lakulīśa, who appears prominently within temple programs as a fully endowed manifestation of the god Śiva in ascetic form (fig. 1.3). The absence of Lakulīśa at many other temple sites, including a fair number of seventh- and eighth-century places in the vicinity of southern Gopakṣetra, indicates that other groups were equally active in the construction and maintenance of temples.

Although Śaiva Siddhānta has been seen traditionally as a later phenomenon, Śaiva Siddhānta gurus appear very early in the inscriptional record, particularly in relation to the patronage of kings. Records of the recruitment of Śaiva Siddhānta gurus by initiation-seeking monarchs appear as early as the seventh century and then with increasing frequency in the ninth and tenth centuries. However, it was around the turn of the millennium that inscriptions truly proliferated across the entirety of the Indian subcontinent, in effect signaling a more systematic incorporation of Śaiva Siddhānta as a state religion. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, Śaiva Siddhānta gurus emerged as core figures within the administrative structure of a range of royal kingdoms. In some cases, the king's personal religious preceptor took on the office and title of rājaguru, who began at this time to

FIG. 1.3.
Lakulīśa depicted seated on a lotus in a niche on the central bhadra wall of a temple, c. 8th century AD. Main group of temples, Batesar.

usurp some of the duties of the earlier brāhmaṇical royal priests (that is, the *rājapurohita*). In other cases, inscriptions connect kings to growing sacred centers marked by the construction of monumental temples and large stone monasteries. As institutions empowered with the right to collect tax revenue at the marketplace and administer land, both temples and monasteries may have served as outposts of state authority and as key nodes in a growing transregional mercantile economy. Thus by the tenth and eleventh centuries, ascetics were encountered not only through the trope of the wandering sage or forest hermit but also through the institutionalized monasteries that functioned variously as religious schools and repositories of ritual knowledge, as housing for the practitioners who maintained the life of nearby temples at large sacred centers, and as powerful administrative institutions sanctioned by royal states.[38]

What is notable is that the inscriptional record thwarts a simplistic interpretation of religious patronage as stemming exclusively through the authority and desires of a king wishing to obtain merit and to ensure the religious well-being of his subjects. Rather, the gurus featured in the inscriptions of the Mattamayūras appear as active participants in their transactions with royal patrons, and they fully used those transactions as opportunities to increase their material resources

and to renegotiate their social position within the structure of a newly burgeoning state. Both the patron kings and the Mattamayūra gurus should be understood as subjective agents in the sense that they were invested with what Ronald Inden once described as the "power of people to act purposely and reflectively, in more or less complex interrelationships with one another, to reiterate and remake the world in which they live, in circumstances in which they may consider different courses of action possible and desirable, though not necessarily from the same point of view."[39] The success of Śaivism among India's elite during this period was largely rooted in the ability of Śaiva Siddhāntins, in particular, to support large lay devotional communities, to incorporate brāhmaṇical practices even as they introduced new deities and ritual texts, and to forge close ties with kings. However, the forested wilderness remained a crucial element, both as a place of origination as well as a vital source of ascetic power, even as Śaiva monasticism became firmly fixed in the center of states.

CHAPTER 2

Inscribing Asceticism

Epigraphic Practices and the Materiality of Text

In the opening chapter to *Indian Epigraphy* (1998), Richard Salomon makes particular note of the primary importance of inscriptions for historians seeking to understand ancient and medieval India. Despite the "extreme paucity" of historical literary sources found in other major world contexts, he points out that the inscriptional record for India in antiquity is one of the richest in the world, with well over ninety thousand inscriptions already uncovered, and the number increasing steadily from year to year.[1] For scholars of early and medieval India, Salomon's case is a well-known fact: for well over a century, epigraphy has formed the foundation for the decipherment and writing of premodern Indian histories. This vast inscriptional record has provided an immensely rewarding array of names, dates, and events, known to us through no other sources, which have, in turn, formed the basis for establishing a range of cultural, economic, and religious practices. Because inscriptions are frequently tied to specific places or objects, for which they often provide details concerning patrons and chronologies of making, they have been of particular use to art historians invested in contextualizing sculpted images and architectural materials.

This much has most certainly been the case for the inscriptions associated with the Mattamayūras, which, unlike the monasteries they adorn, are not an unknown corpus. They have been circulating in the scholarly sphere for over a century and a half, most notably stimulated by Cunningham's discovery of the Ranod "palace" in the 1860s and Kielhorn's revisiting of the Ranod inscription in 1892. In the 1950s, eminent Indian historian V. V. Mirashi brought the Mattamayūra records together as a unified set by calling attention to the remarkable comprehensiveness of the lineage of sages that could be culled through epigraphs spanning across most of central India. By compiling lists of names and dates mentioned in inscriptions, Mirashi produced a rough chronology beginning in the sixth or seventh century and established, with varying accuracy, the Mattamayūras' connections to royal dynasties and to recorded archaeological sites. The many scholars who followed up on Mirashi's work in subsequent decades have continued to synthesize new information in order to derive a more precise chronology for the lineage, to better locate the origins of individual gurus, and to determine the range of the ritual practices and relationships with royal patrons.[2]

The excitement of historians is not surprising, given the range of the overall inscriptional corpus and its seeming correspondence with a range of real places. However, when examined more closely, the sense of a seamless inscriptional corpus begins to break down. The most pressing problem can be located in a significant temporal disjuncture between the dates of inscriptions' production and the lifetimes of the earliest sages and patrons they describe. Although the events detailed within the inscriptional texts seem to go as far back as the seventh century, not a single Mattamayūra inscription can be dated any earlier than the second half of the tenth century. In fact, the records that tell the earliest histories were produced primarily during a relative short fifty- to seventy-five-year period, between about AD 950 and 1025. If one considers the corpus not as a compendium of historical facts but, rather, as a series of related "epigraphic events," then the presence of an inscription becomes, more than anything else,

indexical of the act of its commissioning rather than of the historicity of the narrative that it tells.

Considering the making of inscriptions as a process of production—rather than simply as an archive or textual document from which to mine historical information—raises new questions. The most important is why it became suddenly desirable in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries to commission inscriptions at monastic sites. In this chapter, I take this issue as a point of departure to reevaluate the inscriptional corpus, not only in terms of what it can tell us about the passing of events, but also in terms of what it can reveal about the many ways in which inscriptions functioned at monastic sites. In so doing, I interweave two distinct yet related approaches. The first approach examines how inscriptions functioned as acts of historical reinvention at a moment when the Mattamayūras were particularly engaged in establishing strong monastic institutions. Whereas earlier inscriptions associated with other Śaiva religious groups were commissioned most often on the occasion of the initiation of a king, this tenth- and eleventh-century corpus primarily records acts of building, such as the construction and renovation of monasteries, step-wells, and gardens, and of the installment of gurus and ācāryas in new royally patronized, monumental dwellings.[3]

The second approach emphasizes the intermediality of inscriptions as both texts and material objects. As written texts, they engaged multiple genres and modes of writing, including religious hagiography, courtly poetics, and legal charters. At more complex levels, they may have developed new meanings through oral explanations carried over to audiences not necessarily literate in Sanskrit courtly languages. They likely also served a curatorial function, informing their readers about the projected history of the monastery and its inhabitants and, in the process, carrying the potential to shape both affective experience and perceptions of place. As objects, they were inserted into distinct architectural environments, where at the most basic level they communicated, through their very visibility and presence, a form of cultural and political power. Because most of the Mattamayūra inscriptions were carved in stone rather than etched in copper plate, they would have been prominently displayed and also inextricably tied to specific places; they functioned as new instantiations into the physical environment, which carried the potential to significantly transform both the meaning and experience of encountering a physical place. As a result, the creation of an inscription can be seen as a performative act in which multiple agents—including ascetics, royal patrons, poets, and stone masons—came into play in the production of broader architectural histories.[4]

Reassessing the Epigraphic Corpus

Altogether, over a dozen stone inscriptions across North and central India can be attributed directly to the Mattamayūras. Approximately half of these come from sites in ancient Gopakṣetra. These include two fragmentary records from Kadwāhā (c. AD 975–1025), a large inscription still in situ at Ranod (c. AD 975–1025), an unprovenanced record now in the Gwalior Museum (c. AD 1000–1050), and a

damaged horizontal slab uncovered in the ruins of a Śiva temple at Buḍhi Chanderī (VS 1100; AD 1042–43). The others come from sites further east and are associable with the Kalachuri dynasty, where the Mattamayūras built a significant monastic network and flourished as the rājagurus (principle royal preceptors) of Kalachuri kings. Stone inscriptions have been noted at Chandrehe (dated K 724; AD 973), Bilhāri (c. AD 980–990), Gurgī (c. AD 990–1014), and Jabalpur or Tripurī (dated K 926; AD 1174), and sets of copper plates have been found at Jabalpur (dated K 918; AD 1167) and Dhureti (K 963; AD 1212).[5]

These eleven epigraphs form a core group that can be broadly associated with records extending farther across the Indian subcontinent. The most important include three land grants, a temple foundation record, and a lengthy pillar inscription. Two of the land grants consist of sets of copper plates from the Koṅkaṇ, in present-day Karṇāṭaka and Maharashtra, and record gifts by kings to sages, the first by the Rāṣṭrakūta monarch Kṛishṇarāja (Kṛishṇa III) to a sage named Gaganaśiva at Karhāḍ in AD 959 (SE 880), and the second by King Raṭṭarāja of the Śilāhāra dynasty at a place called Khārepāṭaṇ in AD 1008 (SE 930). The third land grant was carved in stone and once attached to a temple in Rājor, Rajasthan, built by King Mathanadeva of the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras, who, at the time of the icon's consecration, gifted a village for its maintenance to be overseen by a sage named Oṁkāraśiva in AD 959 (VS 1016). The temple foundation inscription was, by contrast, far simpler: it was simply engraved on the architrave of the entrance to the largest temple at Ranipur Jharial by a priest or ritual practitioner (ācārya or *siddhācārya*), also named Gaganaśiva, who had originally come from a place known as Uttara-Terambagṛha. Finally, the pillar inscription was both the latest and most extensive record. Commissioned in Malkāpuram (c. thirteenth century) in Andhra Pradesh, it provides information about the Mattamayūras who served as rājagurus to kings of the rising Kākatīya dynasty, and who followed directly from the lineage of the rājagurus who served earlier in the Kalachuri kingdom.[6]

Some of the connections between the gurus mentioned in these various sets of inscriptions are firmer than others. The sages who served as rājagurus to the Kākatīyas, for example, were directly descended from those who had risen in the courts of the Kalachuris. By contrast, other connections are more conjectural, as the link is only indirectly implied. For example, the sages who resided at Rājor described their lineage not by the name "Mattamayūra," but rather by the name "Āmardaka," which appears also in Mattamayūra inscriptions, as will be discussed later in this chapter. It is worth noting that the name "Sopurīya" also appears in connection with the lineage at Rājor, and, while it is possible that "Āmardaka" and "Sopurīya" were one and the same, it is equally possible that more than one lineage populated a single place. The same can be said of the place called Terambagṛha at Ranipur Jharial, as will also be addressed later in this chapter. It is worth noting that, in all cases, the initiation names of the sages mentioned in the records were distinctly Śaiva Siddhāntin, and that even in the case of more tenuous connections, the lineages themselves may have been closely related through their ties to the broader religious tradition.

Despite the fact that the inscriptions directly associable with the Mattamayūras provide many specific details, only a few record the actual dates of their production. Not only has this left epigraphers to determine most dates on the basis of paleography, but it also establishes a significant dichotomy within the inscriptional corpus. Most of the dated inscriptions come from sites associated with major regional dynasties and likely from monasteries in or near political or religious centers. By contrast, the undated inscriptions were primarily attached to monasteries situated in more peripheral places. In Gopakṣetra, for example, the only dated record is from the capital of the local Pratīhāras of Buḍhi Chanderī (VS 1100). But in the Kalachuri kingdom, we find dates included in the stone inscriptions from Chandrehe (K 724) and Tripurī (K 926) and the copper plates from Jabalpur (K 918) and Dhureti (K 963), the latter of which is not far from present-day Rewa. The remaining Kalachuri inscriptions provide names of their royal patrons, likely assuming knowledge of regnum dates. Such is the case in the inscriptions from Gurgī, written during the reign of Kokalladeva II (reigned 990–1015), and both parts of the Bilhāri inscription, the first half of which was composed during the tenure of Yuvarājadeva I (reigned 915–945), and the second half of which was added by Yuvarājadeva II (reigned 980–990). It is notable that the inscriptions from other regions that were also dated were similarly associated with major political powers, including the Rāṣṭrakūtas at Karhāḍ (SE 880), the Śilāhāra kings at Khārepāṭaṇ (SE 930), and the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras at Rājor (VS 1016).

This close relationship between dated inscriptions and major regional powers points to two distinct conclusions. On the one hand, the practice of commissioning inscriptions at Śaiva monastic sites, as became common by the middle of the tenth century, seems to have occurred not through the impetus of a single dynasty or ruler but as a result of the changing status of the lineage itself. Thus the sudden appearance of so many inscriptions across such a wide geography—within just a couple of generations—indicates that the rise of the Mattamayūras was stimulated not only through growing royal patronage, but also by the standardization of monastic practices across widely diverse yet tightly connected branches of the larger religious tradition. It also likely points to increased support from local and regional lay communities.

On the other hand, the act of dating an inscription seems to have had political associations. The very conventions of dating can be understood as containing political content, conveyed through the choice of era, which was often associated with particular dynasties, and the naming of the ruling king. In using their own era for their inscriptions, for example, the Kalachuris were situating their actions, and particularly their religious donations, in a way that privileged their dynastic history and that consciously differentiated them from their Gūrjara Pratīhāra predecessors. The use of the Vikram Samvāt era at Rājor and the Śaka era at Karhāḍ and Khārepāṭaṇ, by contrast, was consistent with more general practices. The fact that so few of the inscriptions from southern Gopakṣetra are firmly fixable, either through an actual given date or a regnum era, is particularly telling and likely indicative of the relative autonomy of those particular branches.[7]

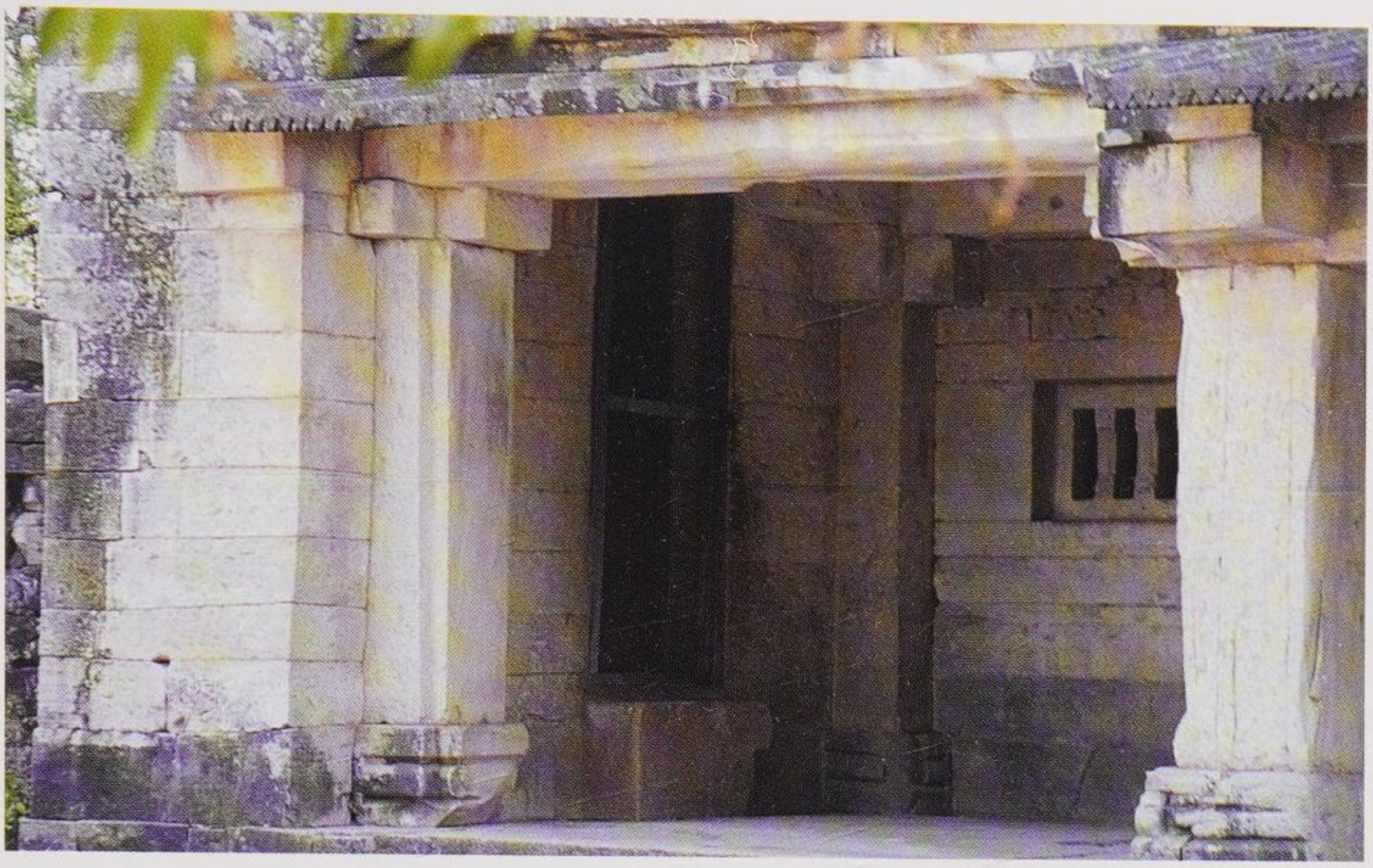


FIG. 2.1.
View of an inscription affixed to the eastern wall of the veranda of the original hermitage, c. late 10th century AD. Seen from the northwest, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 2.2.
Upper portion of an inscription (detail) affixed to the eastern wall of the veranda of the original hermitage, c. late 10th century AD. Seen from the west, monastery, Ranod.

Courting the Courtly: Literary Forms and Material Formats

As lengthy texts carved out on large, dressed slabs of stone and positioned on the exterior walls of monasteries, most of the surviving inscriptions associated with the Mattamayūras were clearly intended as visible and material instantiations within broader architectural programs. Only two, both from the Kalachuri kingdom, were etched on copper plates and likely stored in receptacles, often stone boxes, in administrative offices or temples. Unfortunately, determining exactly how they functioned in the context of their individual sites is not always a simple matter. Only two inscriptions, at Ranod and at Chandrehe, still remain in situ and affixed to their original locations. Nevertheless, they provide an opportunity to think critically about how inscriptions were encountered in real space.[8]

Although quite differently composed and constructed, the inscriptions at Ranod and Chandrehe functioned similarly as threshold objects, positioned on open-air verandas and near points of entry. The Ranod inscription is a truly monumental object, measuring nearly 7 feet (2 meters) tall and 3 feet (1 meter) wide, and consisting of no fewer than 64 lines and 69 verses. The text was carefully engraved on a polished vertical slab and set within a niche centered on the eastern end of an open, north-facing veranda (figs. 2.1–2.2). At Chandrehe, the inscription was shorter, at 20 verses and 27 lines, yet equally prominent. It was engraved on not one but two horizontal slabs—each measuring 1 foot, 4 inches (0.4 meter) in height and 3 feet, 2 inches (1 meter) in width—that were set into the wall of the open veranda along the monastery's front facade (fig. 2.3). They were positioned so that they faced outward and also flanked the ornately sculpted entrance to the monastery proper, centered between pilasters and positioned at eye level. As

FIG. 2.3.
Inscription of Prabodhaśiva, c. AD 973. Affixed to the veranda of the monastery, Chandrehe. Photo ©AIIS.

a result, the inscription would have inevitably been seen almost immediately by anyone approaching and entering the monastery.

Most of the other cases follow, in some fashion, these examples. Those from Buḍhi Chanderī (VS 1100; AD 1042–43) and Jabalpur (K 926; AD 1174) were similar in size to the slabs at Chandrehe (approximately 3 feet wide by 1.5 feet tall), but the inscription from Bilhāri was composed on a monumental scale similar to Ranod, at 6 feet, 3 inches (2 meters) wide and 3 feet (1 meter) tall. The remainder of the substantive inscriptions—from Gurgī, at 3 feet, 2 inches (1 meter) wide by 4 feet, 1 inch (1.2 meters) tall; Gwalior Museum, at 2 feet, 3 inches (0.7 meter) wide by 2 feet, 9 inches (0.8 meter) tall; and the fragmentary record from Kadwāhā, at 1 foot, 7 inches (0.5 meter) wide by 1 foot, 10 inches (0.6 meter) tall—were inscribed on vertical slabs. The differences in scale naturally correspond to differences in the number of verses and inscribed lines, as the size of the actual letters, ranging from approximately three-quarters of an inch (2 centimeters) to 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) high, varied remarkably little from site to site. Similarly, the differences in format likely corresponded to the original position of the slabs within their architectural contexts. Whereas horizontal inscriptions were likely fitted against wider walls, vertical slabs may have adorned smaller gaps or been fitted between pilasters.[9]

The placement of inscriptions on verandas and near entryways within monastic contexts is not surprising. It would be logical to place commemorative slabs at points of entry, and it was in fact customary to do so at temple sites

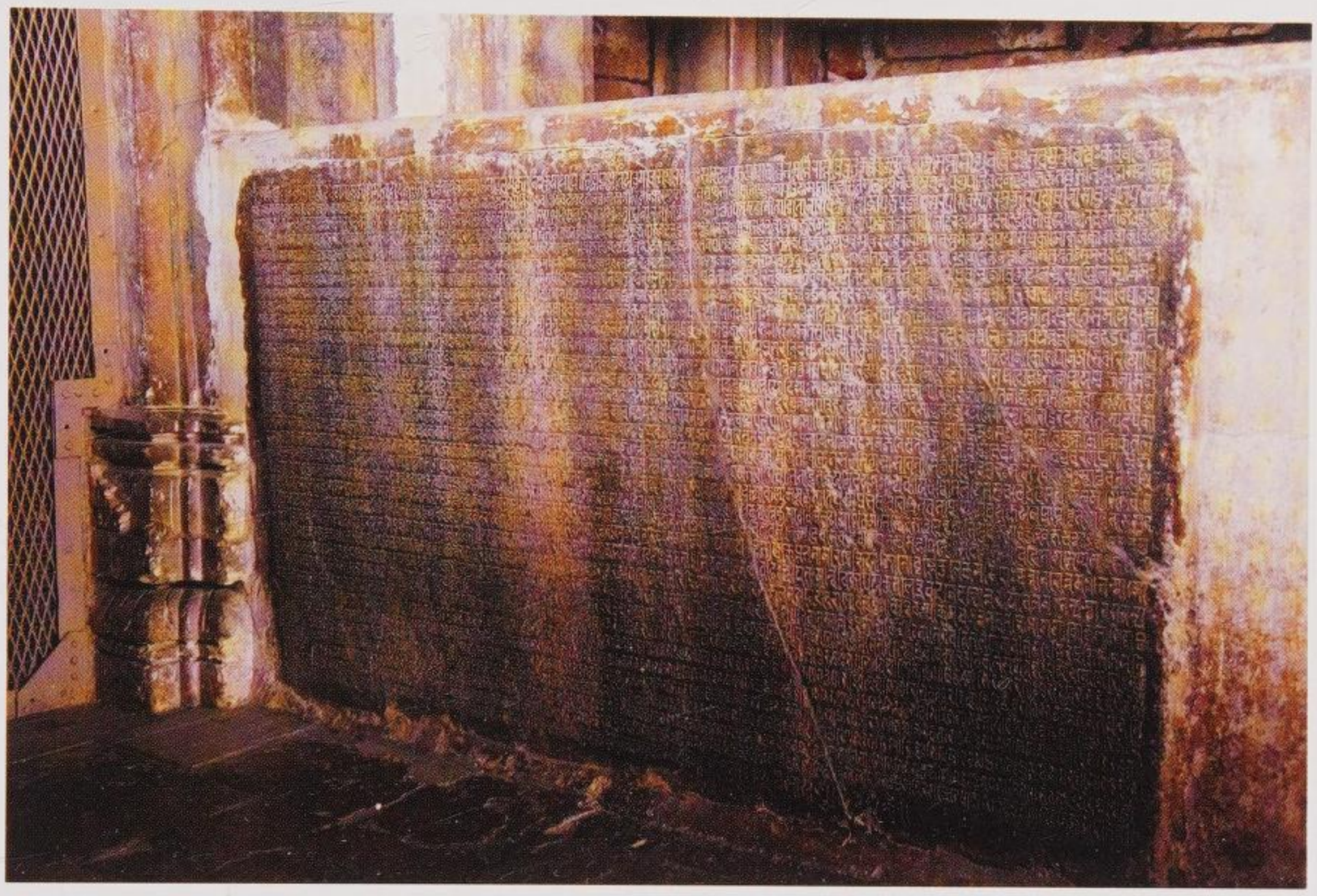


FIG. 2.4.
Main entryway (mukhamaṇḍapa), c. AD 999. Seen from the east, Viśvanātha temple, Khajurāho.

FIG. 2.5.
Inscription of Dhaṇgadeva flanking the entrance in the front entryway (mukhamaṇḍapa), c. AD 999. Seen from the southeast, Viśvanātha temple, Khajurāho.

in North and South India. In temple contexts, inscriptions were frequently displayed either within niches or carved vertically along pillars in the entry hall (*mukhamaṇḍapa*) of the temple proper (figs. 2.4–2.5). The level of patronage was frequently indicated through the quality of the production. Inscriptions documenting the foundation of a temple commissioned by a royal patron or close agent were highly refined documents carved on sunken slabs of well-dressed stone and usually composed in grammatically correct Sanskrit, following conventions of literary aesthetics. Inscriptions of a lesser quality, seen through more crudely carved letters and less elegantly composed language, can also be found throughout the landscape (fig. 2.6). Whereas the first type had a programmatic quality that signaled a higher level of patronage and integration within courtly culture, the second was more frequently used for informal records left by pilgrims or local individuals involved in the installation of new icons, minor restorations, or the exchange of gifts or services that were minor enough, or remote enough, not to merit large-scale royal attention.

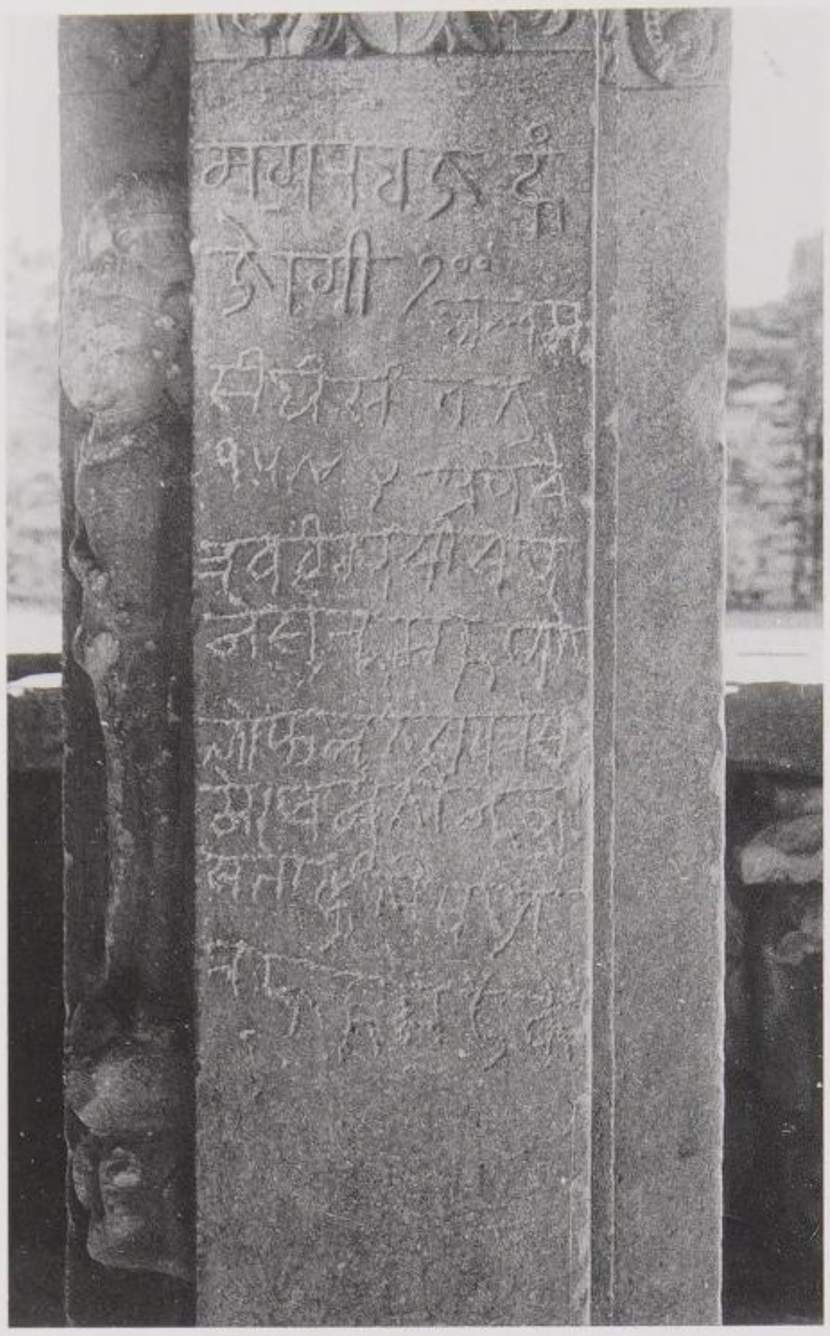


FIG. 2.6.
Pillar inscription, c. 10th century AD. Śiva temple, Padhavali. Photo ©AIIS.

Nearly all of the inscriptions associated with Mattamayūra sites were of the first order, their presentational qualities befitting their literary ambitions. Produced on well-dressed and carefully carved slabs, they more specifically followed the conventions of medieval Indian courtly *praśastis* (panegyric verses), most often commissioned by ruling kings or their administrative agents, for the primary purpose of recording legal injunctions and economic transactions. Among the most common were land grants—for example, in the form of gifts of villages that could serve as endowments to temples, brāhmaṇical priestly communities, individuals, or monastic orders. But praśastis were also commissioned to record a wide variety of official building activities, such as the dedication of a temple or the construction of irrigation systems and wells. These activities were rarely done without mention of the auspicious occasion, which ranged from a successful military campaign eulogized in verse to the performance of particular rituals during a solstice or other auspicious event.[10]

Among the most literary of inscriptional forms, praśastis rarely dispensed with their purpose in a cursory or straightforward manner. Rather, their main purpose was usually included only toward the end of the composition, after extended verses or lines praising the current monarch and presenting a full genealogy of his ruling family. Whether using verse or prose, the authors who composed praśastis were trained in courtly literary styles, and they employed lofty poetic modes and plays with language (*śleṣa,* or punning) freely, in a display of literary prowess. As a result, praśastis should be read not merely as historical records but also as careful engagements with courtly literary culture. In the process of recounting dynastic genealogies, praśastis often delved rather deeply into Purāṇic and *śāstric* worlds in a manner that effectively blurred the lines between historical event and mythical time.[11]

A typical praśasti frequently began in the realm of the gods, before moving toward worldly histories. The first few verses were invocatory verses (*maṅgala-śloka*) in praise of key deities, which were occasionally preceded by an auspicious sign or symbol carved into the stone. The eulogies that directly followed were often about royal genealogies. Allegorical passages situated the king as Indra, king of the Vedic gods, or as an agent of Śiva—or, less frequently in the period, Viṣṇu, who, through the grace of god, was able to achieve victories in battle or rule in strict accordance with the dictates of his duty, or *dharma,* as a member of

the ruling caste. These achievements, in turn, were couched in terms that infused courtly qualities with a deep religiosity. The physical power and beauty of a king's countenance was equivalent to that of the gods, and scholarly and artistic prowess were granted by deities such as Pārvatī, Bṛhaspati, and Prajāpati. Even military victories over enemy territories, often described as conquests of a lover over the wives of his rivals, were compared with Śiva and Pārvatī's amorous encounters in the heavenly heights of their palace atop Mount Kailāśa. The language and content of praśasti inscriptions, in short, were modeled simultaneously on the poetic modes employed in courtly literature and on the ideal world of artistic perfection and moral conduct evoked through religious texts.[12]

Although the inscriptions associated with Mattamayūra sites mostly conform to this general pattern, they are somewhat unusual in that the commissioning authority is not always a king or a royal administrator, but rather often the head guru of the monastic community. This is particularly true for the earlier sites in Gopakṣetra, where rulers may have held limited authority over localized spheres of power. In these cases, monasteries themselves may have functioned also as political entities, wielding a level of authority more often associated with warrior castes (kṣatriyas) and kings. The case shifts radically in Ḍāhaladeśa, where the kings of the Kalachuri dynasty directly commissioned most of the Mattamayūra inscriptions. This situation is not too surprising, given the sheer power and scale of the Kalachuri kings, who were, along with the Chandellas and Paramāras, among the major competitors in the military arena of central India. With the exception of the site of Chandrehe, where the monastery was established very specifically as a peripheral retreat, the inscriptions associated with the Mattamayūras were primarily commissioned by Kalachuri rulers to record the establishment of new monasteries and temples in major urban areas. In the process, they also extolled the king's ability to successfully recruit esteemed Mattamayūra gurus; they also recorded the provision of endowments for monastic communities and their related temples, in the form of land grants and the right to collect taxes on marketplace goods. Because most of the inscriptions in Kalachuri territory were commissioned by royal patrons to record specific legal transactions, they can be read much more easily through the framework of economic, religious, and political histories than their counterparts from Gopakṣetra.[13]

While the actual format and scale of the inscriptions in both Gopakṣetra and Ḍāhaladeśa are roughly equivalent, the relative status of the two regions is articulated through the inscriptions in other ways. On the one hand, the visual uniformity of the script (an elegant and deeply carved Nāgarī) used in the Kalachuri inscriptions suggests a centralization of inscriptional practices associated with royal authorship that is simply not present in Gopakṣetra. On the other hand, the structure of the text similarly illustrates a very different relationship between sages and kings in each of the two regions. In Gopakṣetra, the inscriptions, without fail, emphasize the genealogies and actions of sages, even in the cases where kings are featured prominently. For example, in the Ranod inscription, the only royal patron to be mentioned is King Avantivarman, who appears only in relation to the guru Purandara, and who lived in a long-past moment, five generations (approximately

125 to 150 years) prior to the date of the inscription. Similarly, in other cases in Gopakṣetra, when rulers are mentioned, their eulogies come after the description of the lineage of sages, which remains the key focus in the composition of the text. Quite the opposite is true in the Kalachuri kingdom, where, with the exception only of the monastery at Chandrehe, the surviving inscriptions were commissioned entirely by kings to record the construction of monasteries and temples and the corresponding gifts to the presiding sages. As a result, it is the genealogies of rulers that are emphasized in inscriptions from the Kalachuri kingdom.[14]

Despite these regional differences, the fact that the inscriptions were written in Sanskrit, and in most cases in a courtly *kāvya* style, itself signifies a process of institutionalization and integration with transregional networks. As Sheldon Pollock has shown, Sanskrit had emerged both as the dominant language of the courtly cultural elite by the turn of the first millennium AD and also as the language of political power throughout the Indian subcontinent and further into Southeast Asia.[15] In this way, Sanskrit became a premodern public political language—a transregional expression of power for a pan-Indic interpretive community. This was a language that was associated not just with transregional expansion of royal power or with a top–down model of the diffusion of cultural forms from the body of the king. It was also associated with a much more complex cultural process, through which elite courtly aesthetic forms and practices were transmitted by the circulation of diverse individuals through local and regional courts.[16] The sudden proliferation of Sanskrit inscriptions at Mattamayūra sites thus signals a shift in patronage as well as a more complete transformation of the status of the sect within Indic society. It suggests that the monastery sites were in some ways both becoming an extension of urban courtly worlds and also participating in the broader process of Sanskritization, through which Sanskrit was becoming, following Pollock's framework, the language used in the articulation of both political and courtly power.

As Sanskrit became the language of transregional power, the ubiquitous employment of the Nāgarī script for the writing of inscriptional texts became its visual equivalent, a mode of expression that ensured universal legibility. The Mattamayūra inscriptions are all written in a fairly standard form of Nāgarī, which, despite the continuing use of regional scripts in many places, had become the most common and pervasive script throughout the subcontinent by around AD 1000. Although it might seem obvious, in other world contexts, that the growing prevalence of a language would also necessarily entail a shift in the use of scripts, this is not necessarily true in the case of Sanskrit. Sanskrit, though highly sophisticated as a literary language, operated according to a strict phonetic system, and its beauty often coincided not only with the nuances of meaning attached to words and phrases but also with the careful crafting of sequences of rhythm and sound. A language often associated with orality, it could be written in any variety of phonetic script. The increasing use of the Nāgarī script across multiple geographic regions became then the visual equivalent of a lingua franca, ensuring that anyone who could understand Sanskrit as an oral language could also access it as a written text.[17]

The courtly context of inscriptions was embedded not only in language and script but also in the very mode and manner of their material production. In addition to procuring an appropriately sized tablet from a quarry site, the completion of an inscription required, at the very least, a poet to compose the verses; a scribe to write, or lay out, the lines on the stone; an engraver to carve out the letters; and someone to polish the tablet. A sense for high levels of craft specialization can be gleaned from an inscription found at Bherāghāṭ, just a few miles from the Kalachuri capital at Tripurī. Dated to the Kalachuri year 907, equivalent to Sunday, November 6, AD 1155, the inscription refers to the poet who composed the verses as distinct from the writer who, like a calligrapher or artist, lay the text out on the stone. He again was to be differentiated from the engraver, who "wrought this stone with letters that it is like the star-covered sky," and also from the architect, who designed the building. Of these, the composer and the writer are lavished with the most praise and linked through familial ties—the former is recognized as the older brother of the latter. The writer, named Pṛthvīdhara, is eulogized as one "who has seen the further shores of all the deep oceans of learning, (*and*) by whose crowds of disciples the circle of the regions has been conquered." His younger brother, the composer, is referred to as "the sage named Śaśidhara" who was "well versed in logic and wondrously clever." The architect, named Pīthe, is described as one "who knows the rules of Viśvakarman," the famed architect of the gods, and who planned "all this, as [the mythic king] Pṛithu [brought righteousness to] the earth."[18]

The case was unsurprisingly quite similar at Mattamayūra monastic sites. At Ranod, for example, the inscription still affixed to the monastery involved the participation of four different individuals. The first half of the inscription was composed by one Devadatta; the second half was composed by his son Haradatta; the text was written on the stone by someone named Rudra; and the engraver was an individual named Jejjāka. At Bilhāri, the poet Nāī is noted as a "writer of legal documents," and the engraver Nonna was the son of "the excellent *sūtradhāra* Saṅgama."[19] In both of these cases, the making of inscriptions constituted a distinct set of occupations that was often passed down from father to son. It is possible that different members of the same family intentionally specialized in different types of writing as a strategy for better maintaining business.

In all of these cases, one gets the sense that the occupational specialization, passed down through families, was a livelihood better suited to towns and cities than to agrarian peripheries. More likely than not, the poets of the inscriptions found at more remote sites likely worked in their place of residence and business and may have never visited the sites they extolled in their commissioned compositions. As a result, the text of inscriptions tells us less about the place itself than about its participation in broader cultural spheres. Nonetheless, the ability to mobilize such a network of makers in the creation of an elaborately carved and monumental inscription also indexes a close relationship with larger courtly, or at least urban, networks. Scholars have noted that it was through the cohesiveness of these networks, and the mobility of people, that literacy in the conventions of Sanskrit poetics began circulating more broadly than ever before.[20]

It may be that authors employed in the writing of inscriptions occupied a categorically distinct place in the hierarchy of the courtly literary community, which also included authors better known for their dramatic works and poetic compositions. At the same time, it is likely that there was much overlap, and that the quality of the author depended on the financial means and prestige of the commissioning agent. While little is known about the specific poets who are credited with composing the inscriptions that adorned Mattamayūra sites, we get a sense for their broader range of influences, both through the embellishment of the poetic language and through occasional references to famous court poets. Not surprisingly, such references occur more frequently in places directly associated with royal patronage than with purely ascetic residences. For example, in the AD 1042–43 (VS 1100) inscription from Buḍhi Chanderī, written during the reign of a king named Raṇapāladeva (from the local branch of the Pratīhāras ruling from that place), the poet Daśaratha is mentioned in conjunction with the names of famous, and indeed almost mythical, authors, including Valmīki, Bhāsa, and Kapilā.[21]

Among the Kalachuri inscriptions, the record from Bilhāri is particularly evocative. Before naming the author of the first portion of the praśasti, a verse proclaims:

> May this composition, which deserves praise from the wonder-struck poet Rājaśekhara, and the afore-mentioned glorious work, (*both of*) which have well-joined parts, endure till the destruction of the world![22]

The reference to the poet Rājaśekhara is fairly significant here. He was one of the most revered court authors of the tenth century, best known for his association with the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras at Kannauj. Not only does the inscription's author make the explicit claim that the verses are of high quality, but in so doing, he also alludes implicitly to the cultural exploits of the Kalachuri kings, who had successfully convinced Rājaśekhara to move from Kannauj to take up residence in their court. The significance of the Kalachuris' act of recruiting court poets from far away should not be lost in the context of an inscription recording similar success in convincing prominent ascetics to settle within the Kalachuri kingdom.[23]

Through their status as both well-crafted poetic text and material object, inscriptions communicated, through their very presence, a form of worldly power. The court was a place of aesthetic refinement, where literary culture was disseminated in the form of written manuscripts, recitation, and performance to large groupings of transregional elites. At the same time, temple and monastery sites may have served as additional loci where courtly culture could be circulated in various ways, not only through the sponsorship of royally sanctioned religious practices, but also through the dissemination of inscriptions. Inscriptions, particularly when carved in stone, could be seen and read both by those who occupied a privileged position within the confines of court and by the much wider audiences of pilgrims, travelers, and local lords. By the very act of commissioning

an elaborate stone eulogy, Mattamayūra sages and their patrons were thereby cultivating forms of material and literary culture that translated across the barriers between urban and rural places, and between courtly and ascetic worlds.[24]

Mythological Origins in Śiva's Pine Forest

The negotiation between the courtly and the ascetic also emerges through a close reading of the inscriptional texts, which, as in most lengthy praśastis, began with narratives of origins and past histories before eventually arriving at their ultimate purpose or goal. Through this structure, inscriptional texts fluidly interwove temporalities by linking imaginary, mythic beginnings to a living, contemporary present. Stories of origin conveyed particularly important meanings by tracing claims of legitimacy back to an era far beyond human memory. In the case of kings, stories of origin inevitably established dynastic descent from either the sun or the moon, in the process also tying the kings to mythic rulers from solar or lunar dynasties as described in the great epics and *Purāṇas*. Śaiva ascetic groups, by contrast, inevitably traced their descent directly from the god Śiva, and most often from his manifestation as supreme ascetic and master of yoga. In the case of the Mattamayūras, the story of origins drew from well-established narratives also deployed by other Śaiva groups, while also localizing them in ways that may have taken on new meanings.

The story of the Mattamayūras' mythological origins from the god Śiva is described in particular detail in the inscription from Ranod, and it appears again in the inscription from the Gwalior Museum. The relevant verses, as inscribed at Ranod, can be translated as follows:

> It is said that, once upon a time in the very pleasing Pine Forest [Dāruvana], Śiva, who is accessible only through firm devotion, knowing the rule, after performing a sacrifice according to the rules, granted grace [*anugrāha*] to the lotus-seated one [Brahmā], who had approached [Śiva] with devotion.
>
> From him arose this lineage of sages, (like a tree) whose many branches spread far and wide, that gave fruit whose seed is extensive bliss (liberation), that was free from knots (or hindrances), very full of essence (essential knowledge), and that was without any gaps (breaks in the lineage, or holes in the wood).[25]

Here, the lineage's place of origin is traced back to an encounter between the gods Śiva and Brahmā in the Pine Forest. More specifically, Śiva is identified as the original guru, whose first disciple becomes Brahmā. It is then from Brahmā that "a perfect new line of sages" extends outward, rather poetically, like a tree that grows infinitely in all directions and that produces the "fruit" of spiritual liberation. Because Brahmā is the god most frequently associated with the act of creating the universe at the beginning of time, the act of initiation itself takes on a form of primordial significance.

The appropriateness of such a mythological origin should be readily apparent to anyone familiar with the religious traditions of southern Asia. Most Śaiva sects

sprang from the ultimate god himself, and it is only natural that Brahmā, the divine creator and also the promulgator of the Vedas, would have a hand in the proliferation of a prominent new tradition. But it is equally significant that the setting is indeed the Dāruvana forest, the place where Śiva wandered in his form as the supreme beggar ascetic, known as Bhikṣāṭana. According to the story's various retellings, Śiva's wanderings as Bhikṣāṭana were undertaken as penance for the sin of killing a high-caste brāhmaṇa. More specifically, Śiva was guilty of acting in rage and cutting off one of the god Brahmā's original five heads. The act itself was morally justified in textual sources. Not only did Brahmā's fifth head grow out of inappropriate lust for his daughter, but it also served as an arrogant affront to the sovereignty of the supreme lord, Śiva, whose status was signified by his possession of five heads. Nonetheless, every act of brāhmanacide required expiation, and thus, to atone for his sin, Śiva performed penance by roaming the world holding the fallen skull he had felled and begging for alms.[26]

Along the way, Śiva came to the Dāruvana, or Deodar forest, that was known to be populated by highly spiritual people and a variety of demigods (*gandharvas*). There he had his famous encounter with a group of sages (*ṛṣis*), who were residing peacefully in their forested hermitage. When Śiva entered their place of residence—in some versions as a naked yogi smeared with ashes, and in others as a handsome young man accompanied by Viṣṇu guised as a beautiful woman—the sages' wives and daughters were immediately entranced and so overcome with desire that they started dancing.[27] The sages, however, were less pleased and responded by beating and humiliating the great god. In the process, Śiva's phallus (liṅga), here understood as an instrument of lust, was severed and became fixed in the form of a fiery pillar extending upward and downward without beginning or end. When the sages finally realized their error, they approached Brahmā, who informed them of the truth and instructed them to install Śiva's fallen liṅga in a shrine—to worship it, to practice celibacy, and to re-remember the supreme knowledge of Śiva as the only reality. Śiva's act of delusion was thus understood as a great boon, since it taught the sages an important lesson that could free their minds to achieve true peace and liberation.

The implications of this myth as a point of origin for the Mattamayūras are numerous. Like the sages in the story, the Mattamayūras lived in a densely forested area and worshipped the god Śiva in the form of a liṅga. They lived celibate lives and situated themselves as descended from Śiva and Brahmā. What might be less immediately obvious is that by rooting their point of origin in the Dāruvana forest, the Mattamayūras may also have been drawing power away from other, well-established ascetic orders, particularly the Kāpālikas and Pāśupatas, who also identified strongly with this story. Śiva's unorthodox behavior in the story—and, in particular, his licentious behavior with the sages' wives—has been associated by some scholars with the antisocial behaviors of the Kāpālikas and Pāśupatas. Śiva's penance and behavior in the Pine Forest particularly resonate with the Kāpālikas, who were known for their explicitly sexual practices, and whose principle vow (Mahāvrata) required them to wander the forest for twelve years, begging for alms and carrying the skull of a slain person on a stick. But even

here an act of institutionalization is implied, since, in at least one version of the story, it is explicitly after the Dāruvana encounter that Śiva formally establishes four distinctive monastic orders—the Pāśupata, Kālāmukha, Kāpālika, and Śaiva Siddhānta—to spread the knowledge of how to worship.[28]

In addition to tying the institutional status of the Mattamayūras to a mythological moment of origin, the reference to the Dāruvana may also evoke the power of Śiva's status as an ascetic through more indirect associations with the god's encounter with and conquest of Kāmadeva, the god of love.[29] The story, as it is often told, revolves around a moment of chaos, caused by a demon named Tāraka, who had overrun the world. Tāraka had become invincible, through his own ascetic practice, but, as no invincibility could be absolute, he had to choose one critical opponent. Thinking carefully, Tāraka chose someone seemingly impossible: a son of the ascetic god Śiva, who at the time had fully conquered his lustful desire. In order to overturn Tāraka, the gods had to draw Śiva away from his ascetic practice and arouse his desire. So, they sent Kāmadeva to spark Śiva's passion for the goddess Pārvatī, daughter of the mountain Himācala (Himalaya), who was fated to become Śiva's wife.

Arriving at the forest, Kāmadeva infused the environment with the pleasures of the springtime (Madhu) and of sexual delight (Rati). While this was enough to tax the endurance of the human sages, Śiva remained immune. So, Kāmadeva shot a flower arrow into Śiva's heart, meant to cause "infatuation" and "delusion" (*mohana*). Recognizing the trick, Śiva quickly reconquered his senses and resumed his yogic practice, until he noticed Kāmadeva on the verge of shooting a second arrow. He became overcome with anger and, with a beam of light flashing from his third eye, quickly reduced Kāmadeva to ashes. On the petitioning of the gods, Śiva restored Kāmadeva to life, albeit in a formless state, in which Kāmadeva could continue accompanying Śiva as a perpetual attendant (*gaṇa*). The desired union between Śiva and Pārvatī did occur, as a big springtime celebration. However, the motivation for the marriage was not a result of Śiva's capitulation to desire, but rather of Pārvatī's intensive attempts to attract Śiva's attention by performing increasingly intensive austerities and living as an ascetic in the mountains.

While this story may have been particularly appealing to the Mattamayūras, who are described frequently in inscriptions as conquerors of Kāmadeva, another version found in the *Vāmana Purāṇa* may be even more revealing.[30] In this case, the god of love tormented Śiva by shooting him with arrows of desire during a time when the great god was mourning the loss of Satī, his first wife. Distraught, Śiva turned for assistance to a tree spirit (*yakṣa*) named Pañcālika. In exchange for taking on Śiva's torment and giving him relief every year during the springtime, more specifically during the month of Caitra (March–April), Śiva granted Pañcālika a boon that would bestow a state of intoxicated pleasure to all who worshipped Pañcālika during that month. For that month only, worshippers could partake freely in such revelries as singing, dancing, and merriment without losing their yogic powers. Shortly thereafter, Śiva saw Kāmadava preparing to strike again, and so he fled into the Pine Forest. It was at this point, in this version of the story, that Śiva had his encounter with the Pine Forest sages, arousing the

lust of their wives and incurring their wrath. Here, his liṅga, which fell off as a result of the curse of the sages, became a flaming pillar that caused havoc in the world. Brahmā and Viṣṇu were called upon to find and propitiate Śiva, who had disappeared into the light, in order to request that he remove his flaming liṅga and restore peace to the world—which he granted on the condition that the gods begin to worship the liṅga.

Both parts of this latter telling can be understood as significant for the Mattamayūras. The clearest is the parallel between Śiva and Brahmā's encounter in the Pine Forest, as described in the origin story of the Mattamayūras, and the act of propitiation that led to the worship of the liṅga by the gods. The second is more circuitously associated, but perhaps even more important. It relates to the very designation of the lineage by the name "Mattamayūra," which may allude to Śiva's deal with Pañcālika. The most direct connection between the two may be through the etymology of the Mattamayūras' name, which is technically a compound that joins the two terms "*matta*" and "*mayūra,*" to create the meaning of an "intoxicated" or "drunken" (matta-) peacock (mayūra). While the notion of becoming "intoxicated" evokes the revelry and pleasure-making associated with worshipping Pañcālika, the reference to the peacock functions as a signifier of springtime. In courtly literature, in which amorous love remained a persistent theme, peacocks were frequently associated with both the inherent sensuality of springtime and the lushness of the monsoon, or with the prolonged months of their mating season, which extended through the summer's end and during which they were known to shriek and preen in the wake of the coming monsoon rains.[31] In this sense, the lineage name itself may have resided at the intersection of literary culture and ascetic practice, evoking a renunciatory existence that nevertheless opened up ways for participating more freely in the world.

From Mythical History to Historicity

At both Gwalior and Ranod, this story of Śiva and Brahmā in the Dāruvana forest is immediately followed by verses that provide a detailed genealogy of ten preceptors who followed from this act (fig. 2.7). These mark an apparent transition from mythology to historicity, reinforced through the conventions of a praśasti, and from the movement from moments of cosmic origins to human places and times. Accordingly, for well over a century, scholars have made significant efforts to identify the origins of the Mattamayūras and to work out the identity of the earliest sages, focusing on the question of where and when they lived, on the basis of named places and patrons known from other records. Not surprisingly, the most difficult to locate have been the earliest sages, or the ones who lived centuries prior to the actual writing of the inscriptions. Scholars have debated whether these sages may have lived as early as the seventh or eighth century, and whether they emerged locally or emigrated from other regions, even potentially as far away as the Punjab.[32]

However, the fairly late appearance of inscriptions at Mattamayūra sites, as much as 150 to 200 years after the monasteries they adorned, raises questions

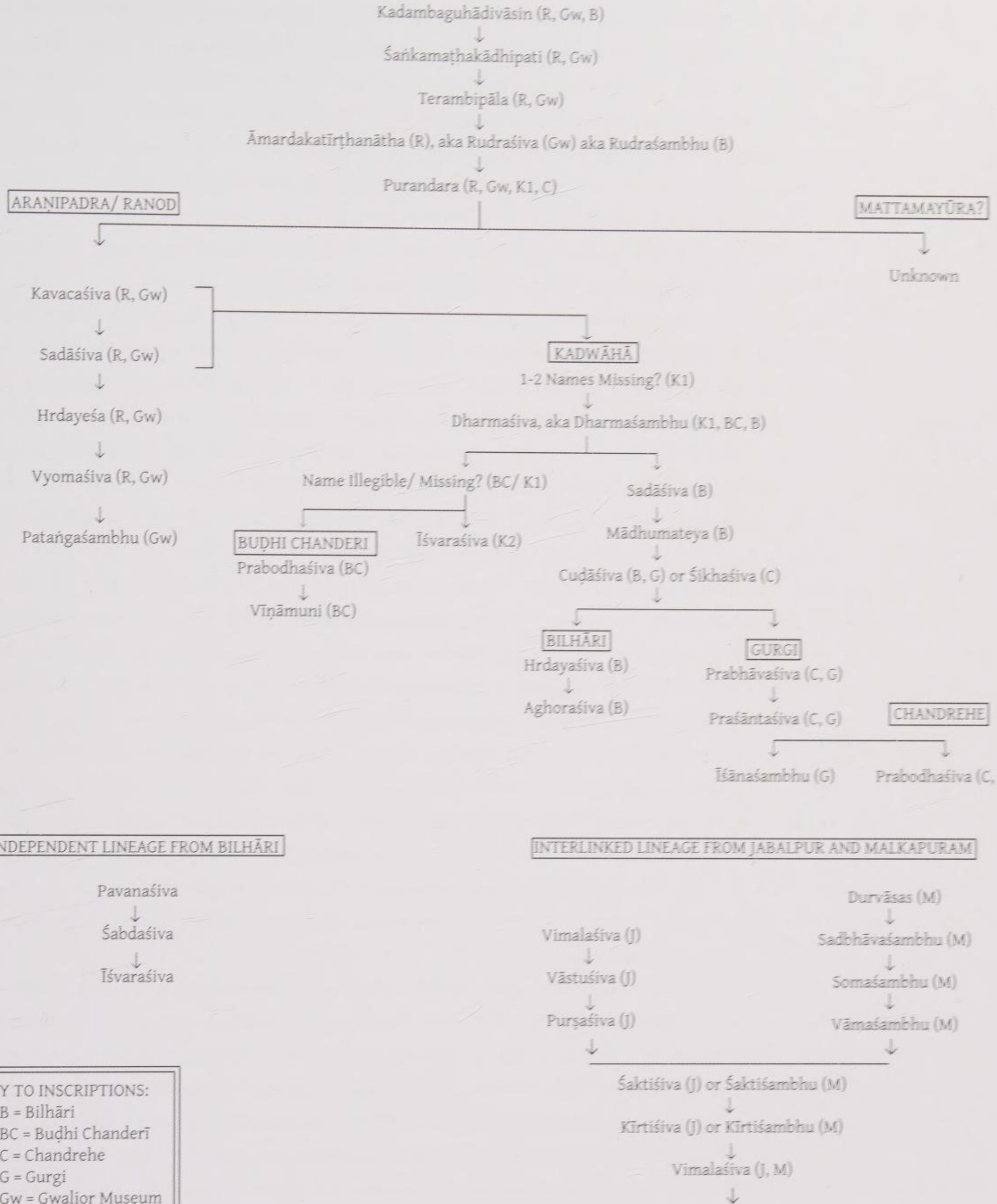


FIG. 2.7.
Genealogy of
Mattamayūra sages from
inscriptions.

about the very nature of the sources, their historicity, and their ultimate intent. The temporal disjuncture between the time of inscriptions and the lives of the earliest sages circumvents any possibility that the inscriptions served as documents recording events as they happened. At best, they might mark a moment at which an oral history—or a history passed along through some less permanent written medium that no longer survives today—was monumentalized and made permanent through its inscription in stone. As a result, the critical question seems to be neither that of where or when the lineage may have originated, but rather of how such genealogies functioned in the formation of religious identity.[33]

In the case of the Mattamayūras, the genealogy described within inscriptions holds the key to its own meaning, signaling crucial transitions through a range of cues in composition and language. The most significant distinction is between the earliest four sages, who may represent a mythologized, long-past history, and the fifth sage, Purandara, who appears to form a bridge to verifiable historicity. Particularly telling is the fact that the first four sages are not listed by name, but rather by the places they adorned. Thus we have Kadambaguhādivāsin, or "the inhabitant of Kadambaguhā"; Śaṅkamaṭhikādhipati, or "the overlord of Śaṅkamaṭhikā"; Terambipāla, or the "protector of Terambi"; and Āmardakatīrtha-nātha, or "the lord of the pilgrimage place (tīrtha) of Āmardaka." The fact that these names describe places has not been lost on scholars, who have attempted to map them onto known archaeological sites on the basis of linguistic similarities between present and past names. Thus Kadambaguhā has been understood sometimes as Kadwāhā, Śaṅkamaṭhikā as Surwāyā, Terambi as Terāhī, and Amardaka possibly as Amrol, which no longer retains any trace of a monastic dwelling, but which still contains the remains of two Śiva temples from the eighth century. It should be noted that these assignations are far from uncontroversial, and that some scholars have suggested a point of origin that was somewhere else in India, and most notably closer to the holy pilgrimage site of Ujjain in western Mālavā (Malwa).[34]

While the seeming specificity of the sources makes it tempting to definitively match them up with present-day locations, the evidence for doing so remains tenuous at best. Not only are the linguistic similarities sometimes extremely tenuous, but the names themselves may have more nuanced meanings that suggest a mythical geography or sacred mapping, rather than a strict delineation of historical places. This is particularly clear in the cases of Kadambaguhā and Āmardakatīrtha, or the first and fourth sages, both of whose names may have carried multiple associations within a medieval Saiva context. "Kadambaguhā" more specifically combines two Sanskrit words—"*Kadamba,*" a type of tree, and "*guha,*" or cave—in order to suggest a place that literally denotes a cave next to a Kadamba tree. In addition to being considered particularly holy in many Indic religious contexts, Kadamba trees were also plentiful in the central Indian wilderness, and they remain so today. Describing the region in the eighth century, the poet Bhavabhūti wrote of mountains covered by Kadamba trees "made majestic by the display of their opening blossoms."[35] Such a landscape would surely have been assumed to be populated by cave-dwelling sages, who not only are mentioned in many literary sources,

but also were well known to have created rock-cut shelters. Within Śaivism, the landscape may have recalled the story of Śiva's time in the Dāruvana, as it was in his incarnation as "Cave-Dweller" (Guhāvāsī) that the great god had his famed encounter with the Pine Forest sages, according to a number of Śaiva sources. Whereas Śiva reigned as ascetic lord of the Pine Forest, the first Mattamayūra sage was rooted in a local or regional landscape, notable for its proliferation of Kadamba rather than pine trees, the latter of which were typically found farther north in Himalchal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Kaśmīr.[36]

Similarly, the joining of two Sanskrit words—"*Āmardaka*" and "*-tīrtha*"—to describe the place of the fourth guru may have had the effect, for anyone versed in Śaiva Siddhānta traditions, of grounding the sect back to a mythical origin found in Tantric Śaiva literature. According to textual sources, Āmardaka was a semidivine sage who was attributed with the initial spread of Śaiva Siddhānta as revealed by Śiva. The story, as it is told, is that Śiva, taking pity on humans trapped in the spiritual abyss of the Kali Yuga, commanded the sage Durvāsas to promulgate his doctrine. Durvāsas then created three mind-born sons—Traiyambaka, Āmardaka, and Śrīnātha—who respectively founded the Non-Dualist (Trika), Dualist (Śaiva), and Dualist–Non-Dualist schools of Śaiva philosophy. Given his importance, it is not surprising to find references to Āmardaka in a wide variety of Śaiva sources. In inscriptions, the name Āmardaka appears at least three times—at Senakapat in Dakṣiṇa Kosala (seventh or eighth century), Hāḍḍālā in Saurashtra (early ninth century), and Rājor in Rajasthan (AD 959). But even more significantly in the twelfth century in southern India, the famed Aghoraśivācarya, guru to the Chola kings, was affiliated with a monastic network stemming from Durvāsas himself, who was understood as having established a lineage of gurus (*guruvaṃśa*) at a hermitage at a place called Āmardaka. By the seventeenth century, Āmardaka appears with particular potency in a listing of one of the most important Śaiva pan-Indic pilgrimages, that of the twelve sites associated with the appearance of Śiva in the form of the *jyotirliṅga* (pillar of flames), and, at the time, was understood as being in Maharashtra.[37]

Although Śañkamaṭhikā and Terambi remain more ambiguous, they, too, seem to carry deeper meanings at the level of terminology. "Śañkhamaṭhikā" literally translates as "Monastery of the Conch," which may have held a wide range of associations. In addition to forming a critical component of the iconography of the god Viṣṇu, the conch could signal a state of immortality through its association with the goddess Mohinī, who was frequently represented holding a conch filled with the nectar of immortality (*amṛta*), or with the Vaiṣṇava immortal mystic sage Dattātreya, who similarly holds either a vessel or conch in ancient and medieval Indian sources. Terambi, on the other hand, may be a variant on "Traiyambaka," referred to as Teramba in the medieval Indian vernacular, which, like Āmardaka, was one of the three strains of Śaivism promulgated by Durvāsas's mind-born sons. Associated with the esoteric Tantric, Non-Dualist Trika schools that were formulated in Kaśmīr at the same time as Śaiva Siddhānta, Traiyambaka may have evoked the idea of regions farther to the northwest as well as powerful new sectarian movements within Śaivism more broadly.[38]

The notion that Terambi, or Teramba, may have held at least conceptual associations with the far north may be found in a reference to a sage who came from a place called "upper" Teramba (Uttara-Terambagṛha) in an inscription from Ranipur Jharial, in Dakṣiṇa Kosala. Although this epigraph has sometimes been taken as proof of a connection to the Mattamayūra site of Terāhī, it seems far more likely that both references to Terambi—or Teramba—evoke a place that may have been incorporated into a larger mythos surrounding the origins of Śaivism, as articulated in sources produced around the turn of the first millennium in the northern region of Kaśmīr. Together with Kadambaguhā and Āmardakatīrtha, it seems quite possible that the first four sages mentioned in inscriptional sources formed a geographical and conceptual set, book-ended by an evocation of Śiva in the mythical Pine Forest and Āmardaka as the founder and first promulgator of Śaiva Siddhānta in the human world. It may thus be notable that of the four sages, only Āmardaka is mentioned in other Mattamayūra inscriptions by alternative names—Rudra-śiva and Rudra-śambhu, which constitutes an initiation name that incorporates one of Śiva's principle and primordial forms.[39]

In addition to being of ambiguous origin, these first four gurus are also de-privileged within the inscriptions themselves. They are mentioned only in three inscriptions—from Ranod, the Gwalior Museum, and Bilhāri—and when they appear, they are dispensed with fairly quickly in only two or three verses, in the process of moving toward more contemporary histories.[40] By contrast, the sages who follow are given more weight. For example, the fifth guru, Purandara, appears far more frequently, in no fewer than five inscriptions, and in two of these he is mentioned as the first guru in the lineage.[41] The transition to Purandara may represent a significant shift in the genealogy, from what might be considered a mythologized history to veritable historicity. It is even possible that the sages who preceded him may represent a process of systematization, through which important places and names of long-past teachers found in a range of Śaiva sources were incorporated into a singular lineage.[42]

That Purandara may represent the first historically locatable sage, a founder-guru (*ādiguru*) of sorts, is suggested further by the fact that he is the first sage associated with a named royal patron and also the first to be accredited with the foundation of monuments that can still be located today. The Ranod inscription, which praises his actions in five elaborate verses, describes his establishment of two monasteries with wealth acquired from King Avantivarman, one of which likely corresponds with a portion of the monastery upon which the inscription is fixed. However, even here, the transition is not entirely without seams. Purandara is still known only from later sources, and his name similarly carries symbolic valences. It may have been intended as a clever allusion to the sage as an "earlier" Indra (*pura-Indra*), or the king of the gods in the Vedas. The word play on "Indra" was fairly common as a literary trope, as the epithet "Indra among sages" was frequently employed as an honorific. However, here it may have played out additionally as a reference to Purandara's own former residence, described in inscriptions as Upendrapura, or "Upa-Indra-Pura." Literally translatable as "one who is near to Indra" or "Indra's younger brother," even Purandara's place origins may have constituted, as R. N. Misra has suggested, an additional pun on the sage's name itself.[43]

After Purandara, the genealogy seems to find itself on relatively solid historical grounds. Purandara's successors were likely less than one hundred years removed from the dates of the inscriptions and constituted a more immediate chain of preceding teachers. Particularly telling is the shift from potentially symbolic names to monikers that reflect a proper Śaiva initiation, represented by the employment of the suffixes "*-śiva,*" "*-śambhu,*" and sometimes "*-īśa*" (lord). Thus, in the Ranod inscription, Purandara is followed by "Kavaca-śiva," "Sadā-śiva," and "Hṛdayeśa (Hṛdaya-īśa)," before arriving at "Vyoma-śiva," or the inscription's author, who is then followed by Patañgaśambhu in the Gwalior Museum inscription. At Kadwāhā, we find "Dharma-śambhu" and "Īśvara-śiva" among the various resident sages. At Bilhāri and Chandrehe, we find "Śikha-śiva" after "Purandara," who is then followed by "Hṛdaya-śiva" and "Aghora-śiva" at Bilhāri, and by "Prabhāva-śiva," "Praśānta-śiva," and finally "Prabodha-śiva" at Chandrehe. At the very least, the shift from places and puns to proper initiation names seems to be the inscription authors' way of signaling a crucial transition from mythology to history, situated between Śiva in the mythical Pine Forest and more recent human memory.

Religious Knowledge, Authorship, and the Authority of the Practitioner

In addition to mapping a richly layered genealogy of sages stemming back from Śiva in the Dāruvana, the inscriptional corpus also fulfills an additional function of situating the Mattamayūras as practitioners within a broader set of Śaiva religious traditions. In many cases, the act of situating the practitioner comes through direct statements of affiliation to particular bodies of texts, which make it quite clear that Mattamayūra gurus were not only "well versed in the Śaiva Siddhāntas," but also authorities over other religious systems.[44] They wrote key commentaries on ritual texts, and they actively participated in debates on the nature of true knowledge with contemporary theologians, including Hindus of competing religious orders and also Buddhists and Jains. In the process, they performed another key action—they participated as interlocutors within a larger world of circulating texts, aimed at reinforcing the status of Śaiva Siddhānta as the final, "fully completed" system of Śaiva worship, as the one true and all-encompassing tradition with the power to both refute and subsume all others.

Within this context, it is significant that inscriptions make explicit reference to texts written by Mattamayūra gurus. The first appears in the Kadwāhā inscription as a sacred commentary (*ṭīkā*)—ascribed to the sage Purandara—on the *puruṣārtha* (four goals of man), a concept that was notably at the center of the most sacred orthodox brāhmaṇical traditions. The inscriptional verse follows typical patterns of medieval Śaiva rhetoric in describing the commentary as coming forth from the sage "just as the Vedas (came forth) from Śiva," a statement that also represents an appropriation—and subsumption—of earlier brāhmaṇical traditions.[45] The second, referenced in the Gwalior Museum inscription, was a commentary on the six *darśanas,* or orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, attributed to Vyomaśiva; this may match up with the influential *Vyomavatī,* a text that still exists today. The *Vyomavatī* is a commentary on one of the central treatises of the orthodox

Vaiśeṣika school, the *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* of Praśastapāda. Like most Vaiśeṣika texts, it was concerned with the nature of reality and the classification of all things in existence that can be perceived through cognition as *padārthas* (literally, "the meaning of a word"), or objects of experience. It is notable that both of these are commentaries on earlier orthodox brāhmaṇical treatises, as this indicates an active attempt by Mattamayūra sages to engage with and position themselves in relation to a Hindu religious mainstream.[46]

These were certainly not the only texts written by Mattamayūra sages, and other extant manuscripts have been noted elsewhere on the subcontinent. Alexis Sanderson has taken particular note of the existence of a Śaiva paddhati, the *Naimittikakarmānusandhana,* composed in AD 938–939 by a sage named Brahmāśambhu, from the Karkaroṇī branch of the Mattamayūra lineage. Preserved in the form of a manuscript currently in Calcutta, the text has yet to be edited or published. A second reference to a text attributable to the Mattamayūras was the *Prāyaśchitta-samuchchaya,* which has a colophon that specifically mentions the lineage of Mattamayūra preceptors at Araṇipadra, or Ranod, and mentions a sage named Hṛdayaśiva as the author of the text. It is possible that this Hṛdayaśiva is the same as the eighth sage named in the inscriptions from Ranod and the Gwalior Museum, in which he is praised variously for "all the sacred texts (*śastras*) he had studied" and for adorning "a hermitage (*āśrama*) for *tapas* named Araṇipadra."[47] Even if he was not, the mention of Araṇipadra, or Ranod, suggests a genealogical tie between the author of the *Prāyaśchitta-samuchchaya* and the Mattamayūras at Ranod. Finally, the esteemed Īśānagurudeva Miśra, author of the *Iśānaśivagurudevapaddhati,* was at one point identified as a member of a Mattamayūra branch from Mālavā, but this identification has been called into question by scholars who believe him to have been of South Indian origin.[48]

What the inscriptional references to Mattamayūra-authored treatises communicate is twofold: first, that monasteries were centers of textual production as well as repositories of manuscripts, and second, that the gurus who headed Mattamayūra monasteries actively participated in the synthesis and reinterpretation of older forms of philosophical and ritual knowledge. To this end, inscriptional verses make clear mention of many texts and commentaries authored by Mattamayūra sages, praising their clarity and wisdom, as well as their ability to know and supersede the authority of other religious groups. Thus in the Ranod inscription, as in the Gwalior Museum inscription, Vyomaśiva is described as omniscient both through the use of the epithet "*sarvajñaḥ*," or "one who is all-knowing" and by the explicit reference to his possession of a "wealth of correct sight."[49] In the process, he is extolled for his ability to master and refute all other competitors. The inscription tells us:

> In the Siddhāntas, he was definitely a Śiva. In Nyāya, he was Akṣapāda-muni. With regard to the Vaiśeṣikas, he was Kaṇāśina. With regard to the Veda, he was Jaimini. With regard to Sāṃkhya, he was the knowledgeable Kapila himself. With regard to Lokāyata, he was the good teacher. With regard to the Buddhists, he was the Buddha himself. In regard to the teachings of the Jains, he was the Jina. Who, indeed, was he not?

> Because of fear for Vyomaśiva, the powerful roaring of the elephant-like Buddhists dies in their mouths, and the hundreds of jackal-like Jains retract their offensive speech, and even the sound "hum" made playfully by the Mīmāṁsikas was (refuted by him).[50]

These lines draw explicit attention to Vyomaśiva's status as a fully liberated Śaiva Siddhānta guru, before also emphasizing his ability to subsume and refute all other forms of knowledge—most notably, the primary schools of orthoprax brāhmaṇism and heterodox Buddhism and Jainism, all of which were, at the time, competitors in the larger field of sponsorship and royal patronage. More specifically, these reinforce the later claim, found in the Gwalior Museum inscription, of the sage Vyomaśiva's mastery of the six darśanas and his commentary on the Vaiśeṣika school—the actual text of which, in fact, systematically refutes each of the same philosophical and religious groups mentioned in the Ranod inscription.[51]

On a broader level, the assertions of supremacy of philosophical and religious knowledge fit well within the claims of Śaiva Siddhānta to represent the "fully completed Śaivism," or the form of Śaivism that is not merely superior but that contains all other forms of knowledge. Although more aligned with brāhmaṇical traditions than many contemporary, and more esoteric, Śaiva-Tantra groups in terms of the orthopraxy of their rites, the Mattamayūras diverged on the particular emphasis on the efficacy of image worship and temple ritual. Indeed, while temple worship was a key component of Śaiva Siddhānta practice, and likely a reason for its growing popularity, the Mīmāṁsikas were among the brāhmaṇical schools that continued to argue for the superiority of Vedic fire sacrifice (*yajña*) performed by a brāhmaṇa priest and to deny the efficacy of worship directly toward a deity embodied in an icon (*pūjā*). The dichotomy here was as much social as ritual. The Mīmāṁsikas represented an elitist orthodoxy with a social position rooted in caste. By contrast, for the Śaiva Siddhāntins, caste was, at least in theory, a less relevant factor, as has been noted earlier in this book, since initiation was possible for a wider range of individuals.[52]

The positioning of the Mattamayūras in relation to brāhmaṇical schools was as much a subsumption as a refutation of knowledge. Thus it is quite significant to find repeated claims to the Mattamayūras' mastery of the Vedas and their training in orthodox Hindu traditions. The most explicit assertions come from the Kalachuri kingdom and from later periods during which Mattamayūra gurus had long been thoroughly imbricated in the structure of the royal administration. For example, the inscription from about AD 1174–75 (K 926) of the sage Vimalaśiva found at Jabalpur, not far from the Kalachuri capital at Tripurī, praises the sage for having "great regard for the understanding of the contents of the Vedas which they had studied in the right manner."[53] The difference between the status of monasteries in southern Gopakṣetra and those in the Kalachuri kingdom, and particularly at the capital of Tripurī, comes out quite clearly through this rhetorical shift. At Tripurī, Mattamayūra sages were not merely ascetics who also happened to become rājagurus. They were also members of a more complex administrative system, within which their direct competitors were the earlier rājapurohitas, or brāhmaṇical priests. Śaiva Siddhānta's relative social acceptability, rooted in the relative orthopraxy of its rituals, may have put it in a position to be integrated

into royal kingdoms, but appropriate caste status may have been crucial to those rājagurus who became major public officials.[54]

Given the careful positioning against brāhmaṇical traditions, it is interesting that nowhere in the corpus of inscriptions do the Mattamayūras situate themselves against the grain of other ascetic groups, such as the Pāśupatas or Kāpālikas. This may suggest that their true competitors were not the esoteric fringe, but rather other socially acceptable orthodox elites. The particular positioning of various gurus in relationship to the Mīmāṁsikas, Vaiśeṣikas, Nyāyas, and other Vedānta strains of Hinduism was again not exclusive to the Mattamayūras; rather, it kept very much in line with many other Śaiva Siddhānta sources. Being Śaiva was not necessarily at odds with being a brāhmaṇa, and one could be initiated as a Śaiva but still retain one's former social standing. Accordingly, the *Kiraṇa-Tantra,* an early Śaiva Siddhānta text, noted, "Thus he should not transgress even in thought the [rules of] conduct appropriate to his estate and walk of life. Once he has attained the initiation that is [becoming identical to] Śiva, he remains in whichever walk of life he was, and should protect the Śaiva teachings (*śivadharma*) [there]."[55] Such commentary represents the notion that Śaivas explicitly did not see their tradition as contradictory to earlier brāhmaṇical practices, which they subsumed into their practice.[56] Indeed, in many Śaiva reworkings of the story of the transmission of the Vedas, Śiva takes over as the ultimate source of the sacred texts, which become promulgated by Brahmā only after they had been revealed to him by the supreme god Śiva himself. That the acts of revelation and transmission occur in these retellings in none other than the Dāruvana forest is likely not coincidental, given how central the Dāruvana is for the origin stories of many Śaiva sects.

Although such references are clearly about the monastery's status as an institution engaged in the acts of knowledge creation and dissemination on a highly elite level, the true power of the sages, as expressed through inscriptions, was in their perceived status as yogis and ascetics, engaged in the performance of powerful rituals and the practice of austerities. Here too we find an integration of explicitly Śaiva and earlier brāhmaṇical tropes of ascetic practice that resonate both with *yati-dharma,* or the rules pertaining to brāhmaṇical asceticism, and with courtly literature. Inscriptions include many references to the performance of austerities (tapas), which could produce a fiery internal heat (*tejas*), and to the practice of yoga, which could lead to ultimate liberation.[57] But they also make reference to sacrificial fires associated with earlier Vedic traditions. At Chandrehe, the sage Prabodhaśiva is compared to Śiva's son Skanda-Kumāra, "whose hand was skilled in making offerings at the proper time to the high flames of fire," even as it was primarily through studying the sacred scriptures, practicing religious austerities, and meditation that he "realized God."[58] At the Mattamayūra abode in Buḍhi Chanderī, Vedic-type fire rituals were performed along with image worship (pūja), oblations (*abhiṣekaḥ*), and the repetition of mantras (*japa*).[59] The two were not unrelated, as the practice of yoga itself could allow the practitioner to generate the sacred fire internally within his own body.

The Mattamayūras' presence within the actual wilderness world of southern Gopakṣetra may have figured prominently in their own projection of themselves

as stringent ascetic practitioners who practiced strict austerities and lived outside the constraints of householder society. The corpus here is fairly consistent in emphasizing the austerity of Mattamayūra ritual practice and the importance of maintaining an ascetic lifestyle, through eulogies of individual gurus as well as the remoteness of their abodes. The Ranod inscription, for example, repeatedly refers to the monastery with the term "tapovana" (or a "forest for tapas") for generating the potent, fiery spiritual heat. These were places that remained removed from society, where Mattamayūra aspirants could observe vows and remain celibate. In addition to praising the sages for their ability to conquer their senses and desire, the inscription from Ranod threatens "the bad karma of all five fatal sins" on anyone who might indulge in the worldly comfort of sleeping on a bed in the monastery, a comment that might seem generally applicable to an ascetic form of dwelling but may have also been rhetorically intended as yet another subtle jab at the Buddhists, who were known, by contrast, to enjoy their repose on a bed.[60] At Gurgī, the sages are described quite evocatively as "the first best ascetics whose minds were restrained by *vows*,"[61] and at Chandrehe, the guru Prabodhaśiva "realized God by the performance of religious austerities and meditation, and living on the fruits, roots and greens."[62] And finally, at Buḍhi Chanderī, the resident guru became well known by the name of Bhikṣābhuk, literally meaning "one who begs for alms," and it becomes clear through the verses that the attainment of freedom from spiritual bondage was predicated on adopting the "behavior of an ascetic (*yativṛttivinītadośaḥ*)."[63]

The notion of asceticism expressed through these verses was not merely a singular idea that pointed to the cultivation of an abstemious lifestyle. Rather, it represented a fairly ordered way of life, which followed textual prescriptions concerning the path for attaining spiritual liberation. The explicit references to "vows" (*vrata*) are references to the adherence to a particular set of daily practices, which included recitation (japa), daily baths (*snāna*), and, most notably, meditation and yoga. These practices, above all, constitute a form of knowledge, the most potent of which could lead to a state of becoming like Śiva. This was understood as a highly exclusive form of knowledge that was restricted only to those who had renounced the world. Thus monasteries themselves are praised as teaching institutions in which "first-best sages" passed down "the great and flawless doctrine of Śiva to their disciples."[64] The verses themselves functioned in two ways simultaneously: to emphasize the supremacy of the knowledge passed down from guru to disciple, while also reinforcing the exclusivity of access.

Similar hierarchies of access to ritual knowledge are articulated within Śaiva ritual manuals, which frequently drew distinctions between different kinds of practitioners, including gurus and priests (ācāryas), renunciant adepts (sādhakas), and lay householders. Initiation itself was a multifaceted process that was granted at different levels. The first was the basic level of "*samayin*" (initiation into the state of the rules), achieved through a common initiation (*samayadīkṣā*) at which the aspirant became awakened to Śiva and officially entered into the Śaiva community. The second was a liberating initiation (nirvāṇadīkṣā), which destroyed the fetters that imprison the soul and allowed the initiate to achieve liberation

after his death. This was an initiation available in many cases only after a disciple had resided and trained with his guru for at least a year, and it bestowed upon the initiate the status of a son of Śiva (Śiva-putraka). The third was at the highest level of ācārya, which was conferred through the consecration ritual known as *ācārya-abhiśeka*. At the level of ācārya, the initiate was entitled to perform rituals on behalf of himself as well as others. To become the head guru of a monastery, a practitioner had to have received this highest level of initiation.[65]

Mattamayūra inscriptions make it clear that the initiation they conferred was not merely a regular initiation (dīkṣā), but rather a liberating initiation (nirvāṇadīkṣā) that offered potential for full liberation, or ascending to a state of being like another Śiva. Although in many Śaiva sources liberation was something only achieved after death, the inscriptional corpus is full of references to the divinized status of prominent sages, thereby blurring the boundaries between guru and god. At Ranod, the head sage was described very clearly as "the indescribable lord, another Śiva on earth"—fully divine, yet differentiated, rather playfully, by physical appearance, described in the inscription as "the absence of a fierce body having an odd number of eyes." Even in the cases where liberation was referred to as a process completed only after death, the slippage between human guru and his status as a living god is evident both through explicit epitaph and through analogies between his and Śiva's own actions.[66]

The various inscriptional discourses concerning the status of the religious practitioner eventually all come back to the imagined point of origin from the god Śiva in the sacred Pine Forest. It was in Śiva's incarnation as penitent ascetic, vow-taker, and beggar that Śiva embarked upon his original journey. And it was in the Pine Forest that Śiva had his famous encounter that turned a group of sages, understood often as Vedic fire-worshipping brāhmaṇas, into true Śaiva practitioners. The analogy between the world of the Mattamayūra practitioner and that of Śiva was anything but subtle: as the fragmentary inscription from Kadwāhā tells us, "[Purandara] chose this pure place called Araṇipadra for performing penance (tapas), just as Śiva [chose] the divine Dāruvana long ago."[67]

When read as a series of distinct, although interrelated, textual objects, the idea of the inscriptional corpus as a single, unified tradition breaks down into something far more complex. What they describe is both a process of institutionalization and a significant transformation through which communities of ascetics became monastic orders, and commissioning agents negotiated their changing status within the world. This negotiation was both locational and temporal. The stone inscriptions, in particular, can be understood as articulating an interwoven set of narratives that became localized in place. While the narratives themselves may have traveled widely through the oral traditions and portable texts, their inscription in stone initiated a new set of imaginary movements between mythical and monastic worlds. Situated within the monasteries and temples, among the groves and gardens, and beside the tanks built by resident sages, the inscriptions found at Mattamayūra sites did much more than interweave history with mythology in the establishment of a

religious genealogy. They also carried the potential to fundamentally transform the ontology of a place, metamorphosing a monastery built in a wilderness village into the primordial hermitage of the Pine Forest sages, who learned how to worship directly from the highest of all gurus, the god Śiva himself. The extent to which this world was made manifest through built form can only be seen through the architecture of the monasteries themselves.

CHAPTER 3

From Hermit's Hut to Guru's Mansion

Ascetic Practice and Monastic Life at Kadwāhā and Ranod

The first act of building attributed to the sages of the Mattamayūra lineage was the establishment of two very different types of monasteries by the guru Purandara. Whereas the first was a "grand" monastery (maṭha) located in the "glorious city" of Mattamayūra, the second functioned as both a hermitage (āśrama) and a "forest for austerities" (tapovana) in the "wilderness village" of Araṇipadra. Although the historicity of this act may be debatable, as seen in the previous chapter, the rhetorical emphasis on the contrast between grand monastery and ritual retreat is quite revealing. More specifically, it evokes a common fundamental aporia (as noted elsewhere by Kazi Ashraf) underlying ascetic architecture, which may have been heightened by the transition from individual ascetic practice to institutionalized forms of monasticism. Because the act of renunciation was understood as a permanent detachment from worldly affairs, it has been equated, particularly among early Indologists, with a commitment to solitary dwelling outside of society without the possibility of return. However, as has been shown repeatedly over the past few decades, the act of world renunciation was not necessarily synonymous with a permanent detachment, but rather with the establishment of a renunciatory counterculture. In this renunciatory counterculture, power was derived not from a removal from urban society, but rather from the creation of a parallel way of life, as organized monastic orders continued to play an integral role in broader social, political, and religious affairs.[1]

In this chapter, I suggest that the surviving corpus of Mattamayūra monasteries reveals a carefully negotiated engagement with this larger problem of establishing a strong institutional presence for a new religious order, whose power resided in the status of its members as forest-dwelling ascetics. Taking the monasteries at Kadwāhā and Ranod as my primary examples, I look at how the trope of monastic center and ascetic retreat, encountered in inscriptional sources, became manifest through the development of two very different types of buildings. The first was a large and "fortress-like" monastic complex (maṭha) that was located almost invariably within the heart of a larger settlement, as exemplified by the monastery at Kadwāhā. At Kadwāhā, the building's grand scale and highly complex radial plan reflected its status as a major, royally patronized institution situated at the center of a dynamically growing temple town (fig. 3.1). The monasteries falling within this category were often two-storied residences, with a formidable and visually impenetrable exterior and many diverse rooms organized around an internal courtyard. The second was a significantly smaller and more secluded hermitage (āśrama) located on the forested fringes of a larger settlement, as represented by Ranod (fig. 3.2). Far simpler in plan, these often consisted of three chambers accessible through an open and airy front veranda, which was more appropriate for the imagining of a retreat, or "forest for austerities" (tapovana), than an institutional building.[2]

The monasteries that still survive today at Kadwāhā and Ranod represent an ideal point of departure for looking at the formation of a highly regulated ascetic way of life, particularly at a moment of increasing engagement with courtly culture and urban society. On the level of their architecture, they represent the earliest known examples of two distinct typologies of building, which formed the basis

FIG. 3.1.
Overview of monastic site, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.2.
Overview of original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the northeast, monastery, Ranod.

for monastic architecture in the centuries to follow. In this sense, they index the existence of what George Kubler would have considered the "prime objects" or "prime monuments," at a moment when new solutions to the core architectural problem of housing new types of monastic communities were actively being found.[3] In this case, the prime "object" should be seen less as a singular building type than as a pairing of two building types, the forest āśrama and the institutionalized maṭha, which seem to exemplify less a historical progression than a concurrency of practice. They remained distinct yet deeply interconnected responses to changing religious and political environments. Whereas the "hermitage" at Ranod provided a wilderness refuge where sages could continue to cultivate the most rigorous of ascetic practices, the monastic hub at Kadwāhā established an institutional presence for a religious order whose power was rooted in the cultivation of kings. While each remained fully functional as its own institution, it is even more potently in their pairing that Śaiva monastic life was ultimately sustained.

In addition to documenting the emergence of two key new building types, this chapter endeavors to reimagine the shape of everyday monastic life. Among the earliest and best-preserved monastic dwellings, Kadwāhā and Ranod can reveal through their formal elements the daily movements, hierarchical structures, and collective actions of their resident communities. To this end, I look at architecture in relationship to a range of inscriptional records and surviving Śaiva Siddhānta ritual texts. Whereas Mattamayūra inscriptions provide a range of references to religious practices and actions, ritual manuals provide detailed prescriptions for routines of daily worship and codes of behavioral conduct. The activities described in such sources were not peripheral or separate from their architecture. Rather, they were intrinsic to the meaning of the monastery's developing forms. Just as the structure of the building shaped movement and action, action and movement must have been a key factor in determining the shape of architectural form.[4]

Looking to textual sources for answers about architecture is not without problems, not the least of which is that we cannot assume that the precise structure of life within the monastery remained consistent from place to place. In many other monastic traditions, monasteries were part of carefully regulated networks, and the daily routines of those who resided within the monastery were determined by rule books that provided a standard framework for coenobitical life. Books like the *Rule of St. Benedict,* laid out at Monte Cassino, and Buddhist *Vinaya* texts had a wide circulation and established, at least for a period of time, an authoritative code that constituted an already systematized set of practices.[5] Although equivalents do exist within Śaiva Siddhānta, the texts themselves were fairly diverse, in part because they were still undergoing a process of systematization. The earliest *Āgamas* may date as far back as the turn of the eighth century, but it was only in the tenth and eleventh centuries that authors began actively synthesizing them into more cohesive and more broadly circulating texts. Even if one could assume that knowledge of certain key texts was widespread, two obstacles remain. The first is that a text's fundamental meaning could vary significantly from place to place, depending on the interpretation and teaching of individual gurus, whose daily discourses and commentaries functioned as weighty and influential oral

texts. The second is the ever-present disjuncture between text and practice: ritual texts represent an idealized world that may or may not have been realized through day-by-day action.[6] Architecture, on the other hand, irrefutably shaped both movement and affective experience. Religious architecture, in particular, could act as a mnemonic device, its spaces acting variously as "meditation machines" and "memory machines" for the benefit of both laity and monastics, as Mary Carruthers has argued for the case of medieval Europe.[7]

Looking at text through architecture provides one mechanism for stabilizing written sources—for bringing them closer to the realm of lived practice. Architectural forms and bodily movements were not merely related, but they were also mutually informed. Simply put, the architecture of the monastery indexes the concerns of its residential community, just as it likely shaped social structures, ritual movements, and daily interactions as they unfolded on the ground. The formalization of the monastery as architecture, as traced in the first half of this chapter, may be understood as a counterpart to the systematization of ritual action and monastic life that is reimagined through the engagement with texts in the second half. Whereas the creation of new ritual compendia was aimed at creating a cohesive religious system, the creation of new types of monastic dwellings may reflect not merely a process of homogenization at the level of artistic practice and craft, but also a much more important, and conscious, effort at regulating the structure of daily monastic life. The close comparison the buildings discussed here bear with contemporary and later monastic dwellings, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, makes it all the more likely that they do not represent isolated local responses, but rather that they form part of cross-regional efforts to articulate and instantiate a new way of dwelling both within and outside of the everyday world.

Geography, Archaeology, and the Status of Place

Reimagining the everyday at places with such layered histories as Ranod and Kadwāhā requires a process of excavation, of first seeing beyond the modern encounter with the archaeological site in order to resituate the monuments within their medieval landscapes. When encountered today, it is difficult to reimagine the monasteries at Kadwāhā and Ranod as they might have appeared at the moment of their creation, or even during the centuries of their subsequent occupation. Once vibrant places populated by holy gurus and their devotees, both are located in rural areas and remain relatively difficult to access by modern modes of transportation. From the perspective of the present day, Ranod is by far the larger and better connected of the two places. The town proper is situated on a major road, and it still retains many traces of its original fortifications and walls. When Ranod was entered into the 1901 *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, it boasted a population of 2,985, which was considered significant enough to necessitate a school, a post office, and a police station. Since then, the population has grown to include 6,626 people living in 1,133 households, many of whom have been in Ranod for many generations. By contrast, Kadwāhā is significantly more rural, so much so that it did not warrant a mention in the 1901 *Gazetteer*. Despite recent

repaving, many roads remain partly *kaccha* (literally, "uncooked"), and the journey from Chanderi, the largest nearby place, can still take close to two hours. Today, Kadwāhā is steadily growing, but still small. Its recorded population in 2001 was 108 households and 599 people, compared with 826 in 1901.[8]

Appearances, however, can be deceiving, as is most certainly the case with Ranod and Kadwāhā. Their status today is a result of a sustained and layered history that, over the course of a thousand years, has radically transformed the nature of each place. At the moment of their foundations, likely in the ninth and tenth centuries, respectively, they were very different places. Ranod was almost certainly the site referred to in its inscription as Araṇipadra, as is also noted in a one-word epigraph inscribed on the lower courses on the west side of the oldest part of the building. A very small dwelling at the time of its initial construction, the monastery was enlarged greatly in the tenth and eleventh centuries to become the building encountered today. By contrast, Kadwāhā was, at its outset, a growing, royally patronized temple town, very different in form and function from its counterpart at Ranod.

Nonetheless, the two sites were certainly connected, as a fragmentary inscription found within the Kadwāhā monastery makes it clear that its resident sages also traced their spiritual descent from Purandara, who is explicitly credited as having established Araṇipadra as a "blameless place for tapas (austerities)."[9] In the text at Kadwāhā, Purandara is credited with establishing a strong lineage at Araṇipadra that continued to pass through his successors for several generations. Although the inscription is too fragmentary to determine precisely when the lineage was established at Kadwāhā, it seems to suggest that Kadwāhā was established from an offshoot of the lineage at Ranod. Given the architectural evidence, as will be addressed later in this chapter, it seems likely that Kadwāhā's foundation may date not too long before the actual commissioning of the inscription in the late tenth century. The stimulus for the inscription may have been the initiation of King Harirāja of Buḍhi Chanderī by the monastery's presiding guru, as discussed in Chapter 2. Later inscriptions found in proximity to the monastery record the continuing patronage of the monastic community by Harirāja's successors, and it is entirely possible that the inscription may have recorded the monastery's foundation through royal sponsorship.[10]

In both cases, the present-day demographics of the two sites are less vital for understanding the status of the early medieval Mattamayūra monastic community than is the location of the monastery in relation to its broader built environment. Kadwāhā may have been smaller than Ranod—if not initially, then at some point in its later history—but the monastery was absolutely crucial to its development. Situated deep in the heart of the present-day village, it acted as a pivotal point of reference, not only for the development of the fortifications, but also for the many clusters of medieval temples that still encircle the village today. By contrast, the monastery at Ranod stands over half a mile (at least a kilometer) north of the later medieval walled town, along what would have been the forested tracts along the Ahīrāvati River (fig. 3.3). This location near, yet not at the center, of a burgeoning village and later a town settlement may have put the monastery in a position

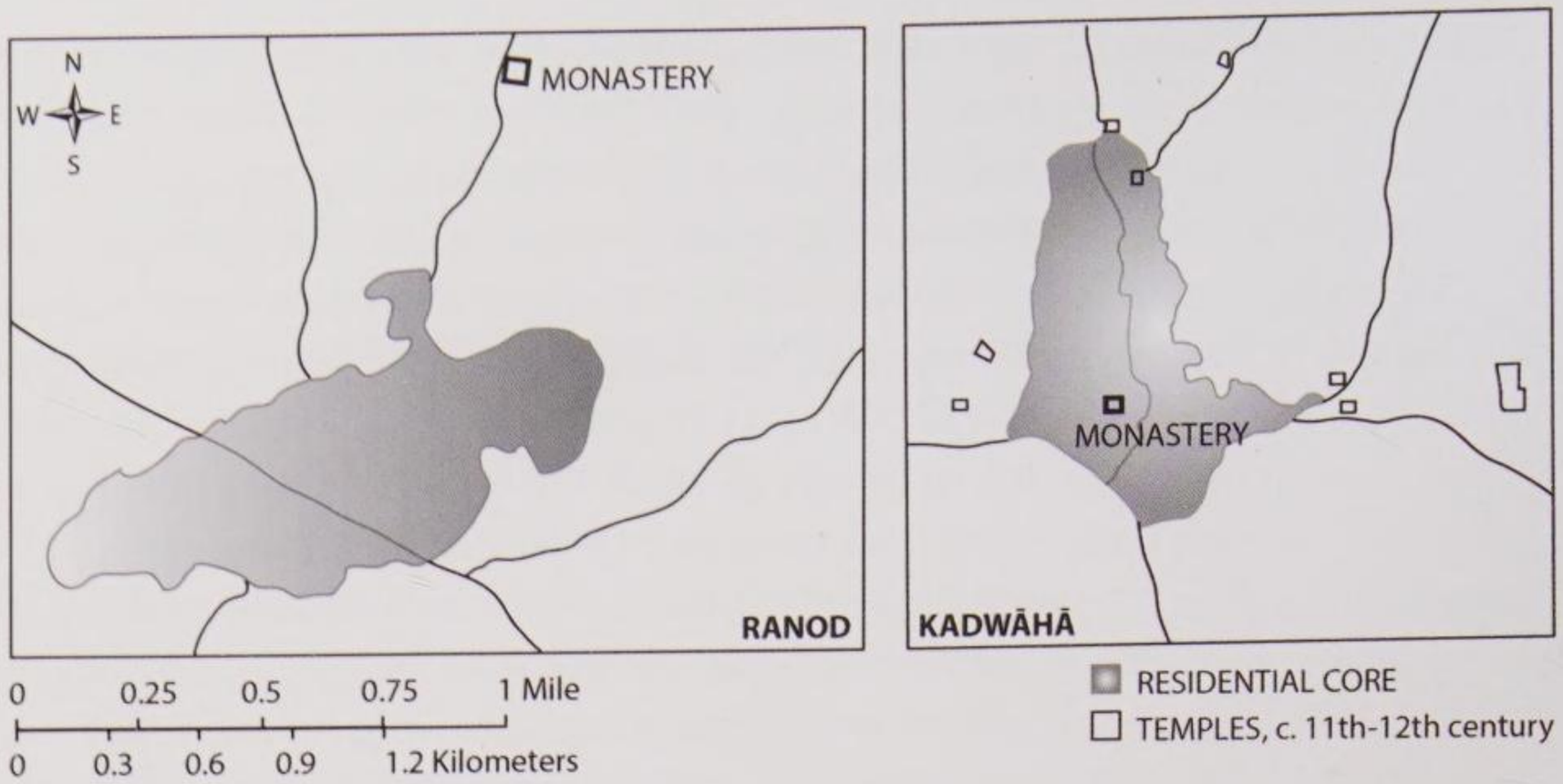


FIG. 3.3.
Comparative map depicting the relationship of the monasteries of Kadwāhā and Ranod to larger settlements.

to cultivate a close relationship with householder society, while simultaneously maintaining an exclusive realm of eremitical practice.

A Forested Retreat at Ranod

Modest in scale and remarkably humble in appearance, the monastery at Ranod still evokes the notion of a quintessential hermitage or forest retreat. Set off at a comfortable distance to the north of the visible boundaries of the present-day town, and within a heavily wooded outcrop amid long stretches of cultivated fields, the monastery is anything but obtrusive. Rather, it blends seamlessly into its landscape environment, its layered profile and sloping rooftops tapering gently almost in rhythm with the trees that subsume it today (fig. 3.4). When examined more closely, the architecture reveals a highly complex history of building, through which great efforts were made—largely in the tenth and early eleventh centuries—to enlarge an earlier site in ways that expanded the scope of the monastic community, while also maintaining the impression of an ascetic retreat. Through these renovations, the earliest foundation—the small, self-contained building along the monastery's south side—became subsumed among a number of new wings encapsulated within a larger enclosure wall (*prākāra*), outside of which were built temples and a step-well, only the latter of which survives (see fig. 0.1). By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the monastic complex may have been fortified and put to new use, as indicated not only by the remains of a Muslim tomb and cenotaphs, but also by the addition of castellated parapets or battlements rising above the original roof (fig. 3.5; see fig. 3.58).[11] These extensive built layers mark moments of significant transformation in both the status and scale of the overall site. Leaving aside the subsequent histories for later in this chapter, here I consider the original form of the monastery, as it may have been originally established by Purandara in the ninth century.

In its original form, the monastery at Ranod can be seen as much as a functional forest hermitage as a conscious monumentalization of an ascetic ideal.

FIG. 3.4.
Overview of monastic site, c. 9th–11th century AD. Seen from the southwest, monastery, Ranod.

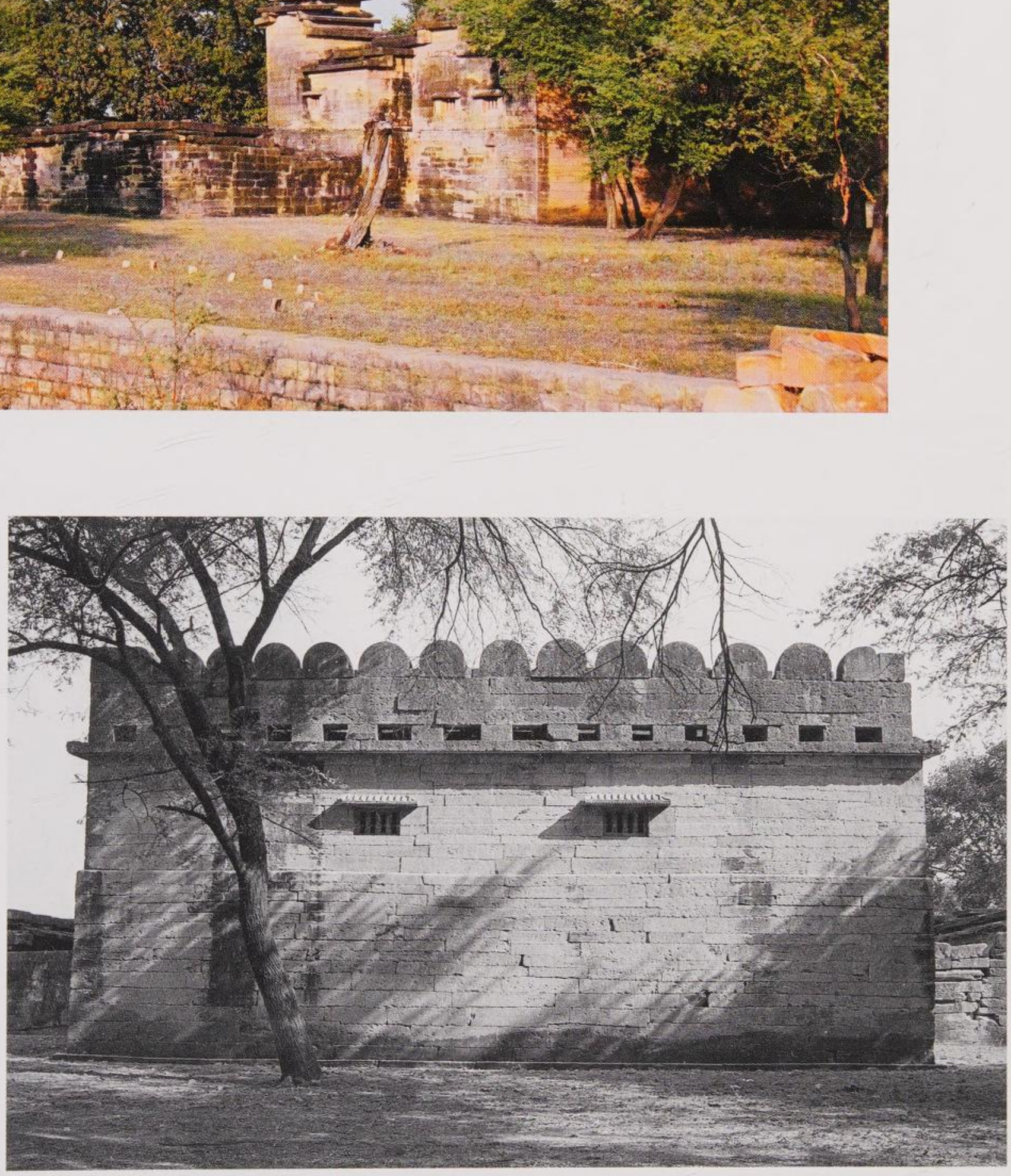


FIG. 3.5.
Original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the south, monastery, Ranod.

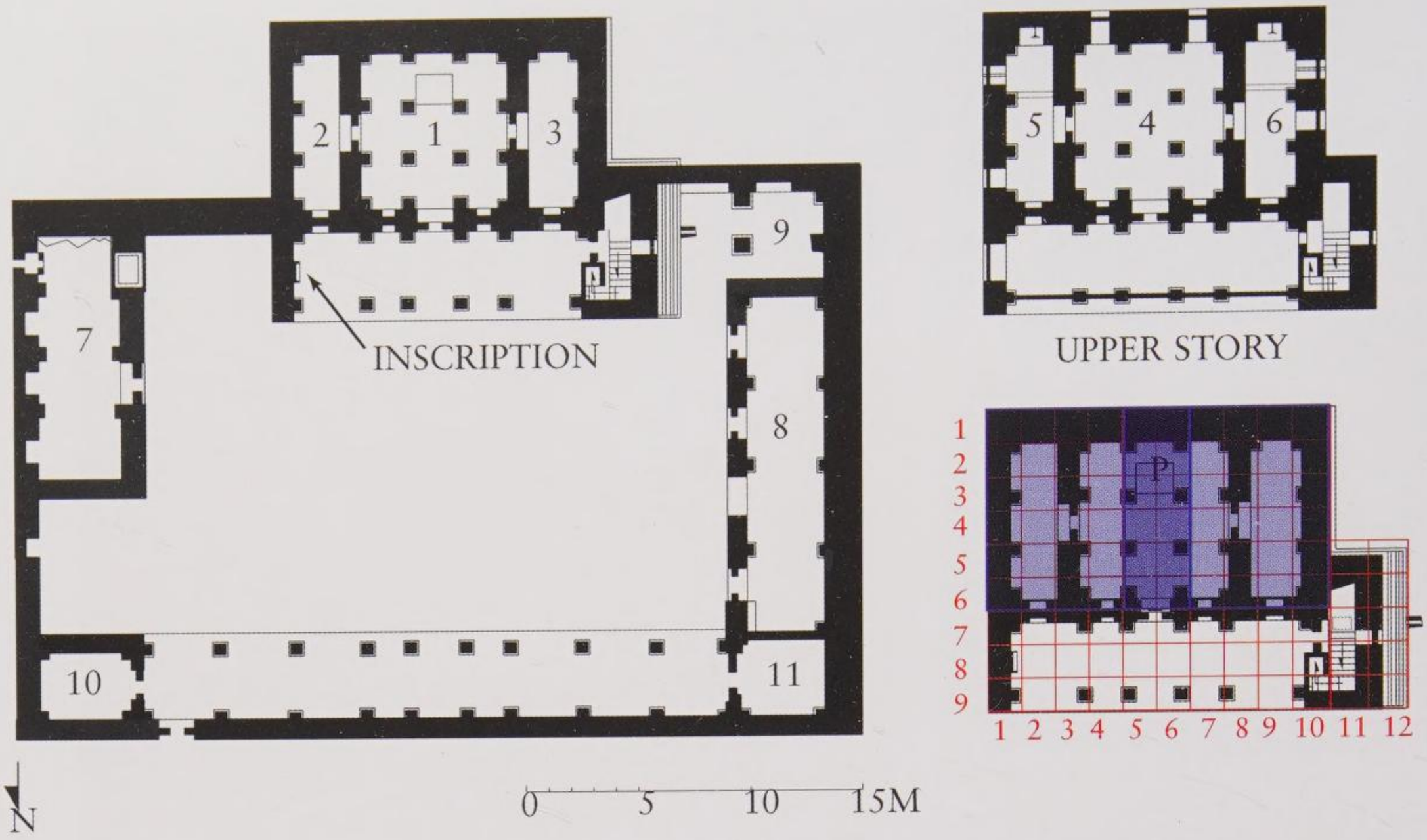


FIG. 3.6.
Plan of the monastery, c. 9th–11th century AD. Ranod.

Measuring only 61 by 41 feet (18.5 by 12.5 meters), the original monastery was both modest in scale and rectangular in its plan, which simply consisted of two stories made up of three identically positioned rooms (fig. 3.6). The idea of austerity was similarly expressed through the exterior, which was assembled of large blocks of stone, carefully dressed and fitted together perfectly, without the use of mortar. Seen from the south, or the approach from the main town, the primary view was of the impenetrable, tall walls of a double-storied building occupying the south side of a larger enclosure (prākāra). It was only after turning toward the north, or front, side that the monastery revealed itself to be remarkably light and airy. Each story was preceded by a long veranda, which let light and air circulate freely in and out of the building. While the veranda remained open on the ground story, on the upper story it was enclosed by a stone half-wall carved to emulate a wooden railing (*vedikā*). This gesture toward wooden construction was repeated throughout the otherwise spare exterior facades of the building, seen particularly in the detailing of balconies and windows that appear in places along the upper walls (fig. 3.7).

The modest scale of the building, the openness of its plan, and the emulation of wooden architectural features seem particularly appropriate for a dwelling intended as a wilderness retreat. At the same time, other elements of the design, and particularly the choice of stone as a medium, suggest an impetus toward permanence and institutionalization. A high level of formalization can be felt most strongly in the careful proportions and layout of the small dwelling. On each story, the main rooms were arranged bilaterally in a distinctly hierarchical order, with the central room functioning not only as the largest and primary chamber, but also

as the sole point of entry, situated directly on a bisecting north–south axis. The primacy of the approach along this axis was reinforced through the deliberately uneven spacing of the pillars along the veranda, which mirrored the structure of the building's interior rooms and bays. The significance of this design was twofold. On the one hand, it had the effect of establishing a coherent conceptual link between the interior ordering of spaces and the exterior articulation of the facade. On the other hand, it created a paradoxical tension between visual focus and physical movement. Whereas the eye was drawn to the central north–south axis leading directly into the building, the widening gaps to the east and the west encouraged movement indirectly through the sides.

The approach into the monastery itself was orchestrated not only horizontally, but also vertically through two rising levels. The first was a step up to the veranda, which acted as a liminal zone, slightly elevated above ground level. The second was a step up from the veranda through the entrance leading into the interior of the ground story's central room (fig. 3.8). The doorway leading inward was simply adorned with an abstract linear pattern—marking off three unadorned bands (*śākhās*), the door lintel and its central niche (*lalāṭabimba*), and the lower jambs. The room that followed was a grand, square, pillared hall, laid out in a

FIG. 3.7.
Veranda (detail) of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the northeast, upper story, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.8.
Entrance to the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.9.
Central room, located on the ground floor of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the northwest, lower story, monastery, Ranod.

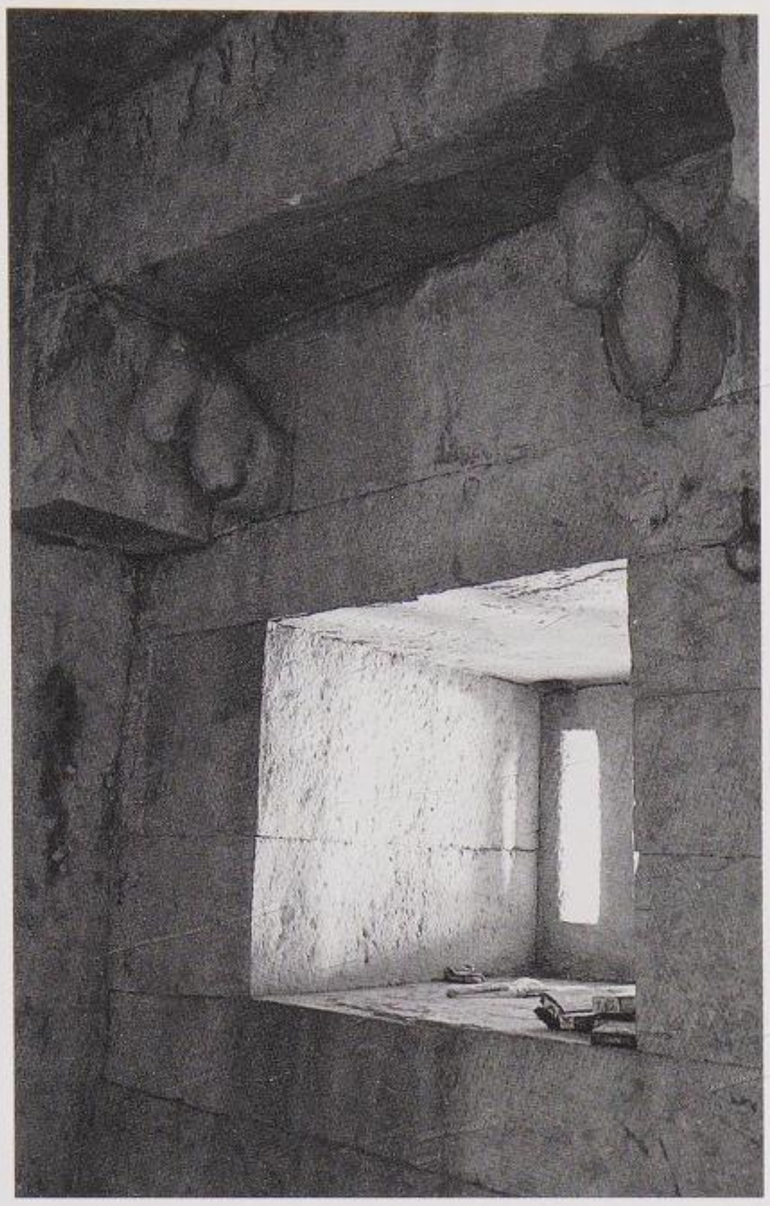
FIG. 3.10.
Platform now housing Bījasen Devī, located at the rear of the central room on the ground floor of the original hermitage, c. 9th or 10th century AD. Seen from the north, lower story, monastery, Ranod.

four-by-four grid. It appears to have functioned as a zone of congregational and possibly ceremonial activity, with a clear visual focus along the north–south axis that was reinforced by the direction of the flow of light and the shadows cast by the room's central supports. Today, the movement along the axis culminates in an encounter with Bījasen Devī, a goddess of great importance in the region, who is installed in the form of a stone icon on a high plinth (*pīṭha*) positioned just beyond the last pair of central pillars, but far enough from the rear of the chamber to allow for the ritual of circumambulation (figs. 3.9, 3.10).

Although the installment of Bījasen Devī is a relatively recent phenomenon, the plinth may have been an earlier fixture built to accommodate a special place intended for the resident guru.[12] It particularly brings to mind early medieval Śaiva

FIG. 3.11.
Horse-head ornaments, located above a deep-set window in the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Lower story, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.12.
View of the veranda, looking toward the entrance to the stairwell of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Ranod.



Siddhānta ritual texts, which describe the throne or elevated seat of the guru, seen also in scenes depicting the guru engaging in the act of teaching (*śikṣādāna*). Such scenes, depicted with increasing frequency on temple walls during the tenth and eleventh centuries, do not only evoke the role of the monastery as a teaching institution; they also resonate with the presence of formalized monastic practice at larger temple sites (see, for example, fig. 0.8).[13] The central room was flanked on either side by two rectangular chambers, entered through doorways to the east and the west, which today are used to store ritual implements, firewood, and other miscellaneous supplies. All three chambers were adorned along the upper portion of their walls by ornamental animal heads, which today function variously as pegs for securing hangings and as candle-holders to help illuminate the dark interior (fig. 3.11).

By contrast, the upper story appears to have been a quieter and more exclusive space, even as it shared the same plan as the rooms below. The movement from the relative openness of the lower story began with a sizable stairwell that was housed in a large extension to the west of the veranda, entered inconspicuously through a doorway half-hidden behind a corner pilaster (fig. 3.12). It could be securely locked from the inside, in effect turning the entire upper story into a veritable stronghold. As

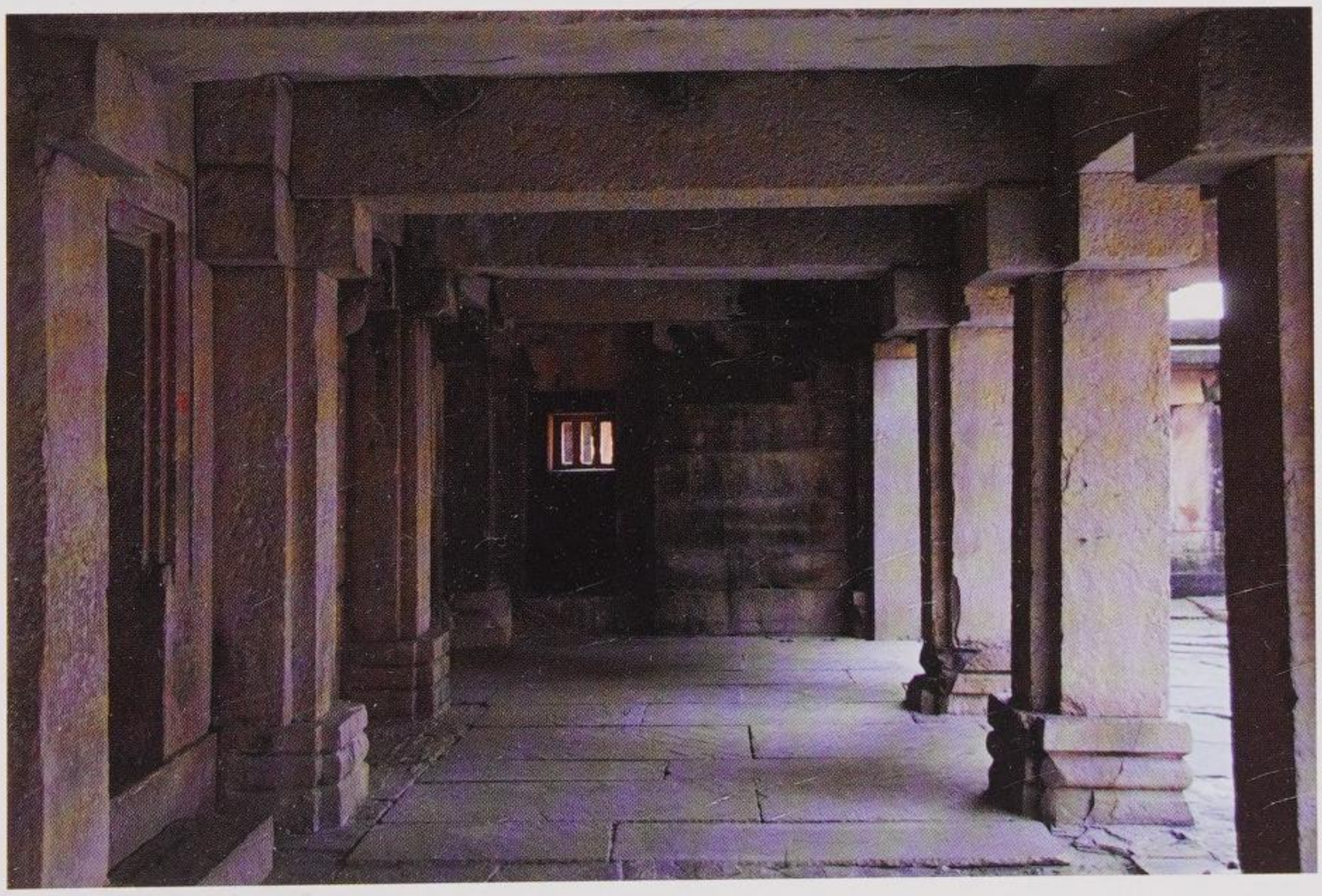


FIG. 3.13.
Veranda of the upper story of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the west, upper story, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.14.
"Bathing" chamber, located to the west of the central room of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the north, upper story, monastery, Ranod.

a highly visible liminal zone, the stairwell may have reinforced the separation of two distinct functional areas, even as it remained carefully integrated into the building's overall plan. Deep windows were set at the center of each story, illuminating the space within, and a shallow basin and drain were set at the very bottom of the ground story in order to prevent it from getting waterlogged during the monsoon.[14]

Once revealed, the rooms of the upper story appeared very different from their counterparts below, even as the arrangement of their actual plan remained the same. The light filtering in through the half-wall of the veranda and through the windows on either side created a dramatic effect, and the central room was considerably open and airy as a result of deep windows set in both the north and south walls (fig. 3.13). Fitted with heavy stone grating, the windows would have provided both shading and cross-ventilation, which would have made the space habitable even during the hottest months of the year. The two rooms flanking the central chamber were similarly illuminated through windows facing to the east and west sides, respectively. Because of their position, each would have been particularly well lit during a different time of the day, with the east room receiving more light in the morning and the west room becoming more hospitable later in the afternoon. Although it is unclear whether or not the lighting made a difference in the timing of their use, both rooms appear to have been identically designed as bathing chambers, as both were fitted with a recessed slab and a drain at their far southern ends (fig. 3.14).

The building culminated at the rooftop, which was elaborately constructed of three tiers of stone slabs carefully fitted together in a fashion that resembled a lithic visual analog to corrugated iron.[15] Each tier consisted of two layers—a lower set of

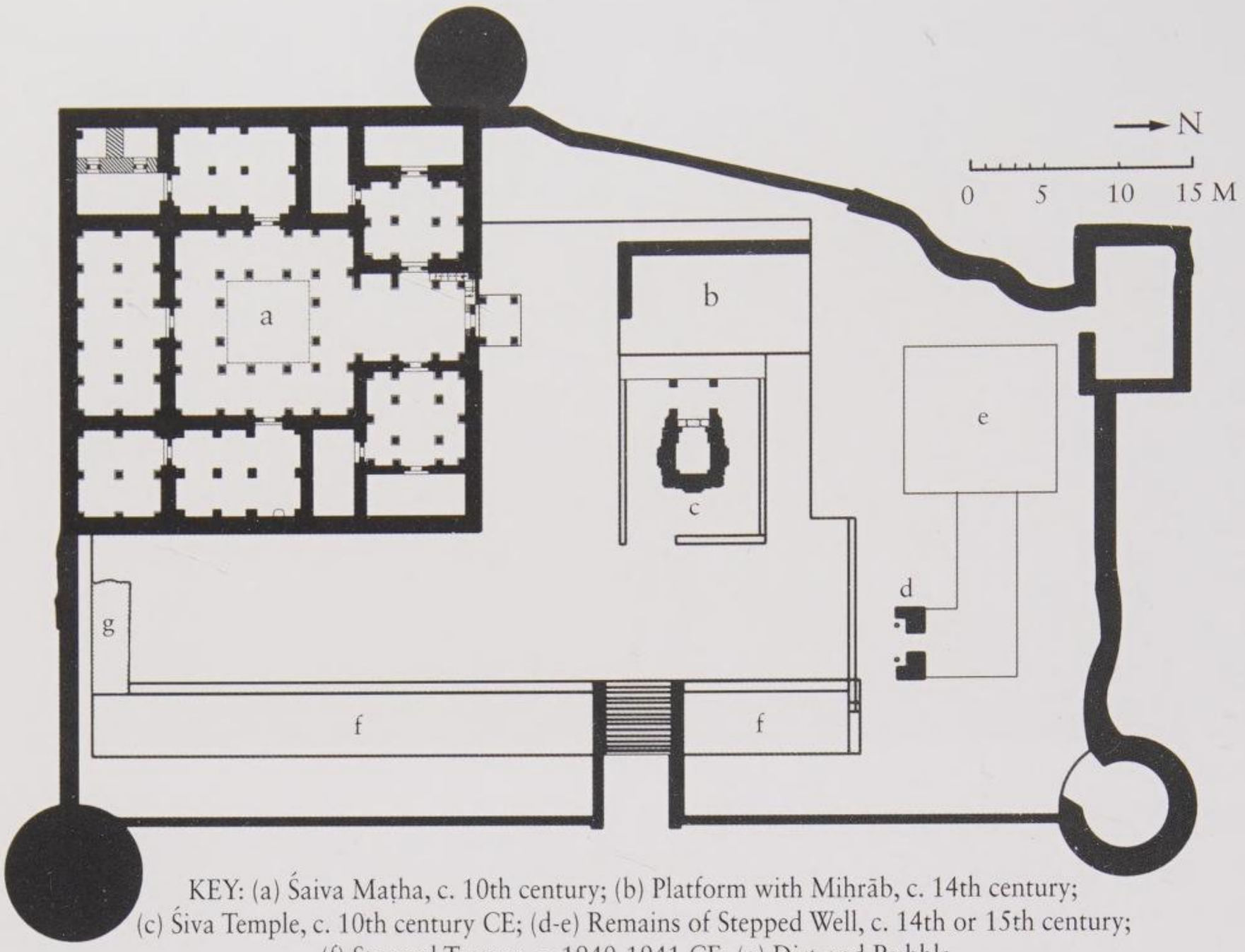
FIG. 3.15.
View of the roofing of the original hermitage, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the west, monastery, Ranod.

large, thin rectangular slabs set perpendicularly along the building, and an upper layer of thicker but narrower slabs laid down to secure the points of junction (fig. 3.15).[16] The mass of stone was made more elegant by a slight downward sloping of the outermost tiers, designed less perhaps for aesthetic effect than as a way of directing rainwater efficiently down the lateral sides of the building during the monsoon. In addition to providing structural stability and protecting against water seepage, the roof also offered a clear vantage point, above the tree line, from which to survey the surrounding landscape of the forests and streams beyond.

A Grand Monastery at Kadwāhā

If the "hermitage" at Ranod projected the notion of a humble shelter intended as a wilderness retreat, then the monastery at Kadwāhā appears, by contrast, to be an intensely formalized and "fortress-like" institution built for a religious order with a prominent worldly presence. Although the monastery itself is difficult to date, a number of architectural and textual details suggest that it was built in the tenth century, and more likely in the second half than the first. Whereas the pillars employed throughout the interior are of types seen in the region primarily after the tenth century, the fragmentary inscription found within the monastery culminates with the advent of King Harirāja of Buḍhi Chanderī at some point in the decades leading up to the turn of the eleventh century. A tenth-century date would make particular sense, given Kadwāhā's broader architectural history and particularly its emergence as a major temple town.[17]

The status of Kadwāhā's monastery as a major Mattamayūra center within a growing temple town was articulated from the moment of first approach, and most impressively through its sheer monumentality. Measuring 89 by 84 feet (27.2 by 25.6 meters) in plan, the monastery took on a prominence within its urbanizing setting, which is enhanced today by its subsumption within a larger



KEY: (a) Śaiva Maṭha, c. 10th century; (b) Platform with Miḥrāb, c. 14th century; (c) Śiva Temple, c. 10th century CE; (d-e) Remains of Stepped Well, c. 14th or 15th century; (f) Stepped Terrace, c. 1940-1941 CE; (g) Dirt and Rubble

FIG. 3.16.
Schematic map of the fortress at Kadwāhā, showing (a) the monastery, c. 10th century AD; (b) a platform with a broken miḥrāb, c. 14th century AD; (c) a Śiva temple, c. 10th century AD; (d–e) a newly excavated stepped well, c. 14th or 15th century; (f) a stepped terrace, c. 1940–41; (g) broken fragments and foundations.

fortress (fig. 3.16). Situated to the south of its accompanying temple, it would have appeared particularly massive, a relentless stretch of unadorned masonry surfaces punctuated only on the upper story by large grilled windows, which expressed the visual impenetrability of the interior and the exclusivity of the resident monastic community (see figs. 3.1, 3.17). The only visual relief was afforded by a shift in building materials. Whereas the lower story was built of large blocks of simply dressed, dry ashlar masonry, smaller blocks were employed in the construction of the upper story. However, this variation in material was likely less an aesthetic decision than one connected with structural concerns. The larger blocks provided greater stability to the building's first story, enabling the use of the more easily transportable and workable smaller stones on the upper level, which were finished on the interior with vertical stone panels (see, for example, figs. 3.37, 3.39).[18] The attention given to dressing the stones and fitting them together on both stories indicated a level of precision in craftsmanship, technology, and design, even as it did little to relieve the remarkable sparseness of the exterior surfaces.

The severity of the exterior gave way only at the point of entry into the building at the center of the monastery's north facade. Although seemingly inconspicuous today, this entrance was once preceded by a short projecting portico, which, as at other monastic sites, likely supported a balcony enclosed by an ornamented half-wall and topped by an overhanging eave (*chādya*), a feature that seems to have become a standard component in monastic architecture (compare, for example, fig. 3.1 with figs. 3.18, 3.19, 4.2, 4.28). Its positioning at the center

FIG. 3.17.
View of the monastery, c. mid-10th century AD. Seen from the southwest, Kadwāhā.

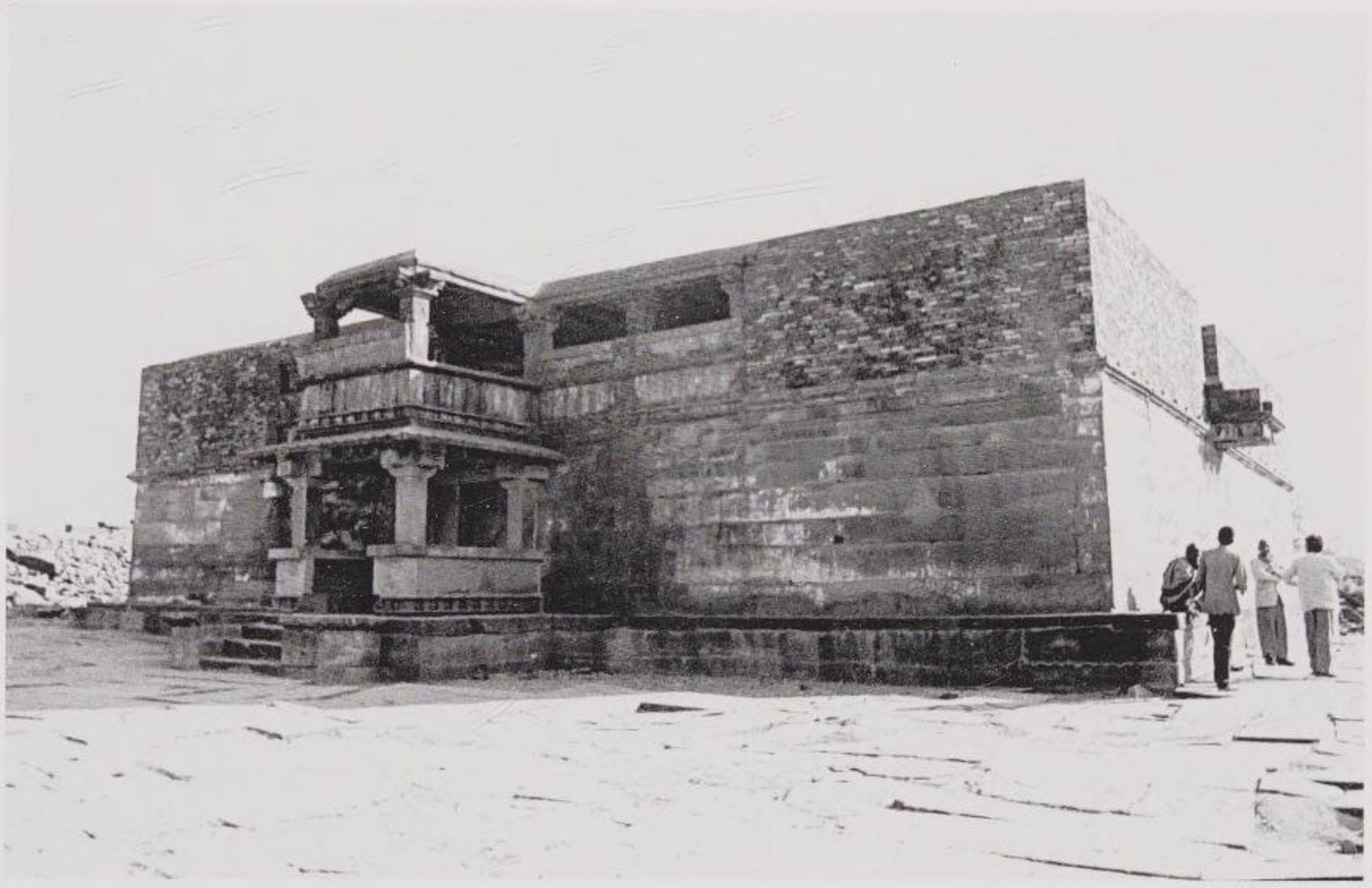


FIG. 3.18.
View of the front portico of the monastery in the main temple complex, c. AD 1169. Seen from the northwest, Menāl, Rajasthan.

of the building's facade is significant, as Śaiva architectural treatises make it clear that "a door (situated on) the median (axis) of a building is appropriate for gods, brahmans, and kings" and that "for all others it should be to the side of that (median axis)."[19] The doorway itself, which does not survive in its original form, would likely have been fitted with thick wooden leaves and possibly ornamented with "glory masks" (*kīrti-mukha*), elaborate bolts, strap-hinges formed like bouquets, branches, and bushes, as well as other flourishes on the handles and central ring. They also may have been finished with plaques covering the joints and fitted into the stone frame using a type of pivot hinge, the holes for which are still visible on the head and sill of the surviving doorframe. Bolt holes at the center of

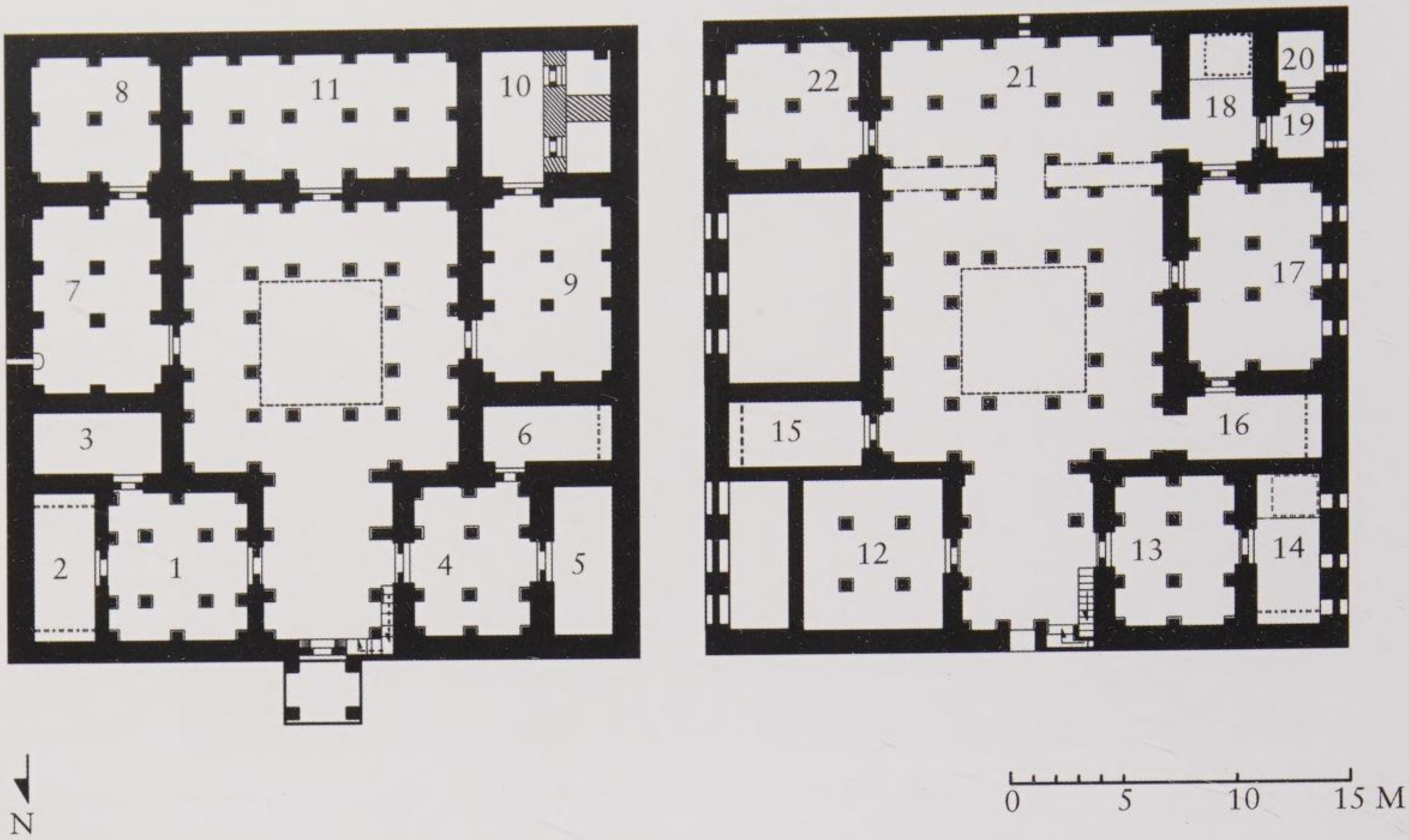


FIG. 3.19.
Plan of the monastery, c. 10th–11th century AD. Kadwāhā.

the doorstep and along either side of the inner surface of the doorframe could be used to lock the door in place and to secure both its residents and any valuables that were stored within the monastery. On the upper story, the balcony would have offered yet another point of transition, allowing for encounters through mutual viewing, even if the interior itself remained visually unbreached.[20]

This grand entryway would have framed a clear avenue of approach into the building's interior, which opened up to reveal a remarkably complex program of unfolding spaces. Following directly from a short entrance hall was a large, open, square courtyard that formed a critical hub at the center of the building (figs. 3.19, 3.20). On a practical level, the courtyard was also the primary source of light and ventilation, as well as the building's circulatory heart; it was the one space through which a visitor to the monastery must pass in order to move from the entrance to the largest and most prominent rooms on the ground story. On a symbolic level, the courtyard acted as an axis mundi, the nexus of the intersecting north–south and east–west axes that divided the plan into equally sized quadrants, providing an external reference point for orienting the individual in relationship to the whole of the Śaiva ritual world embodied in the monastery.[21]

The movement along the courtyard's cardinal axes was emphasized through the slight widening of the central pillars. To the south was a large, rectangular chamber supported by eighteen pillars of the vase-of-plenty (*ghaṭapallava*) type, which marked the area as an important space, appropriately positioned at the culmination of the monastery's north–south central axis (Room 11) (fig. 3.21). To the east and west were two sets of rooms, laterally arranged along the sides of the building (Rooms 7–8 and 9–10), each of which consisted of a square, nine-

FIG. 3.20.
Courtyard on the ground floor, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.21.
Room 11, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.22.
Room 7, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northwest, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

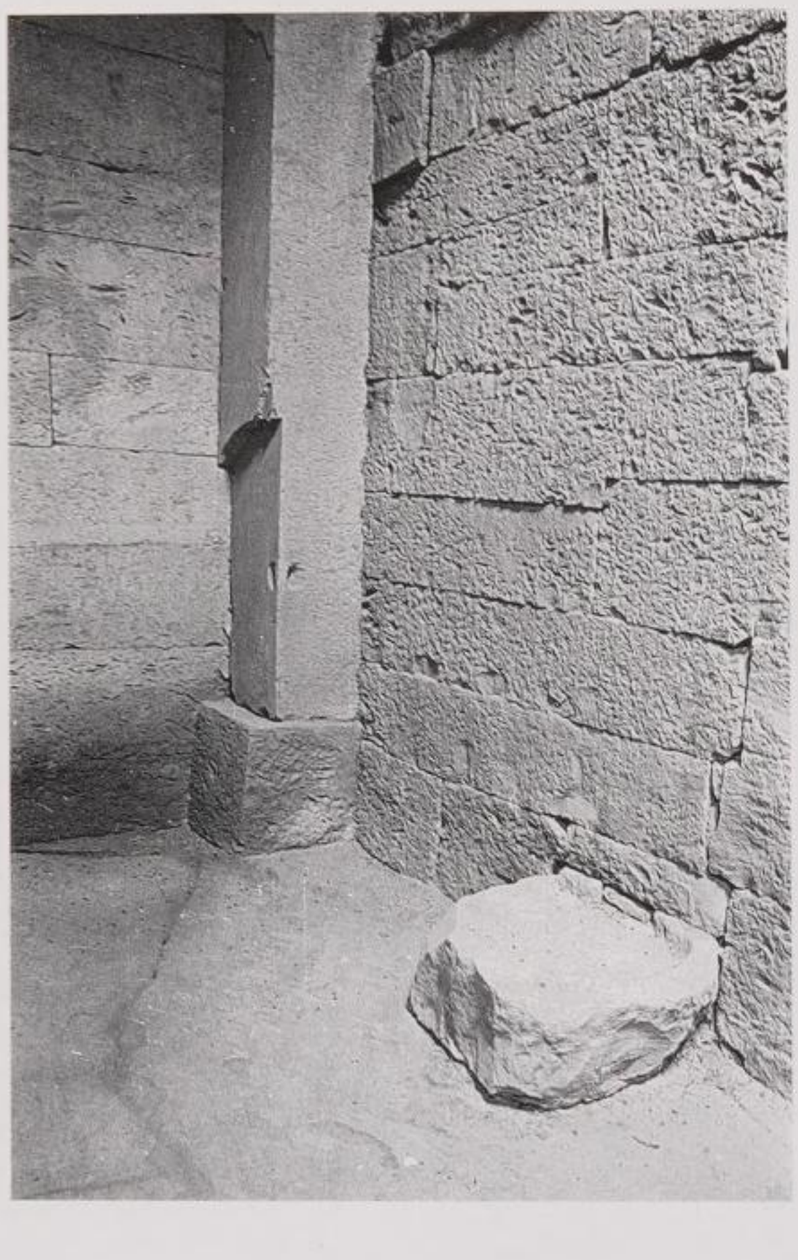


FIG. 3.23.
View of an animal tie and remains of a basin, located in the northeast corner of Room 7, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

pillared corner room preceded by a larger, rectangular, twelve-pillared hall (figs. 3.22–3.25). Although seemingly identical in plan, these two parallel groups were in fact quite different in structure and formal intention. Whereas Rooms 7 and 8 on the east side were monumental, bright, and open, Rooms 9 and 10 on the western side remained extremely dark and sequestered spaces.

On the east side, Rooms 7 and 8 formed a remarkably grand pair. Room 7, in particular, was dramatically double-storied, its high ceiling supported by a set of simple but massive *rucaka* pillars, consisting of a square shaft positioned on a plain base and supporting a simple cruciform-shaped capital. From above, the large, grated windows visible on the building's exterior would have flooded the entire space with light (see fig. 3.22). The resulting impression of the room as a special ceremonial space is reinforced through several details. The most important are the fragmented remains of a stone basin directly across from the main entrance. An animal tie cut into a nearby pilaster seems to suggest the presence of some sort of animal, which, if it was contemporary with the monastery, may suggest that a cow, goat, or other small creature was temporarily kept, possibly to provide milk for rituals (see fig. 3.23).[22] Square-shaped holes, cut into the floor along the west side of the room, suggest that posts made of wood or other impermanent materials may have been erected periodically, possibly to support canopies and to

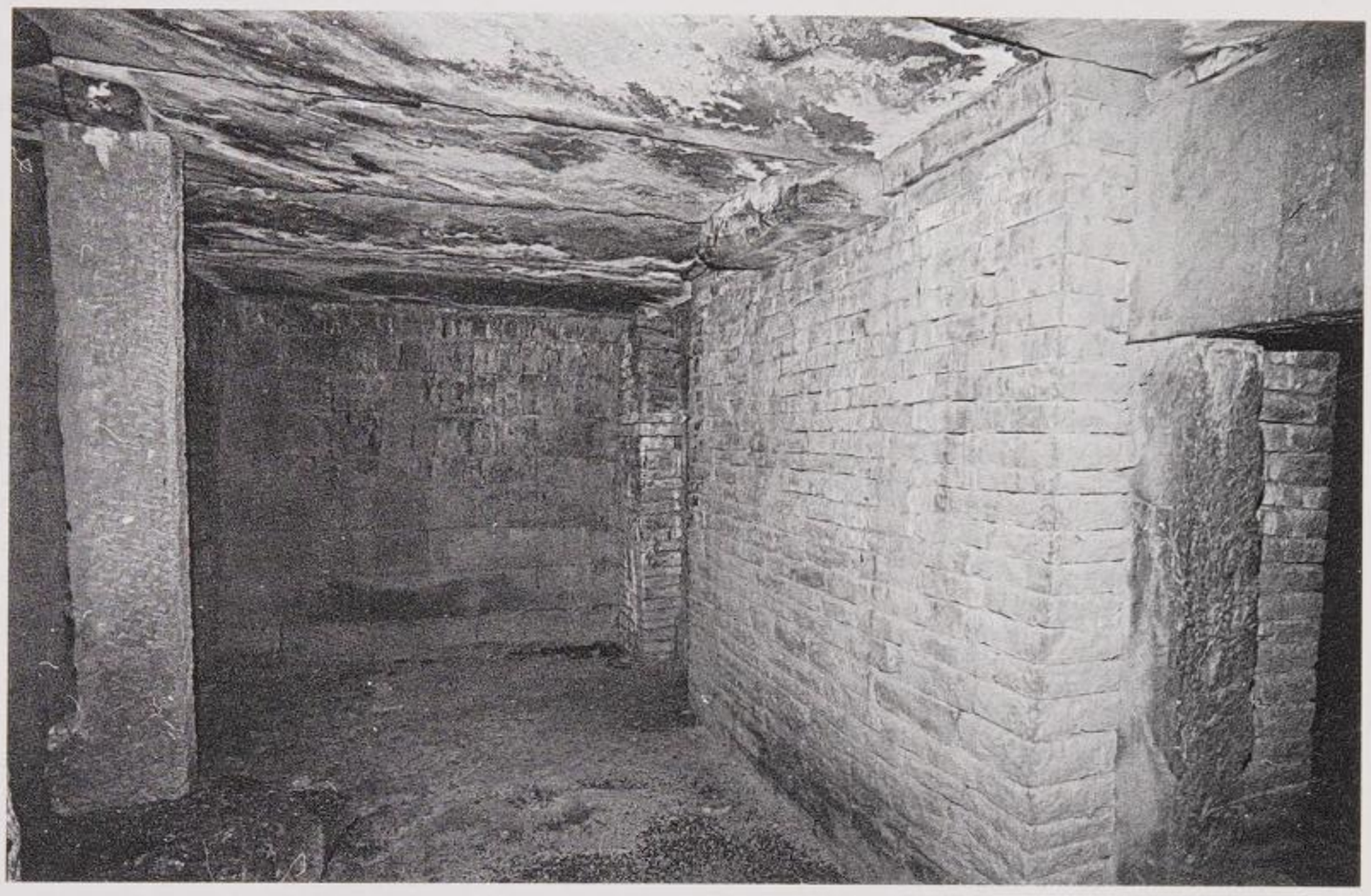


FIG. 3.24.
Room 9, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.25.
Room 10, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the north, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

create temporary divisions of space needed for special rituals. The fixtures along the floor of Room 7 seem to be situated particularly to frame a processional path onward into Room 8, which was a well-sized and approximately square chamber, supported by fine-tooled ghaṭapallava pillars that gave it an appealing finish.

Rooms 9 and 10, on the opposite, or west, side of the monastery formed a similarly linked pair, albeit one with an effect that was quite different. Identical in size and equivalent in placement within the monastery plan, the two formed a passage not through monumentally light and airy spaces, but rather into dark and austere chambers. Because of the lack of light and ventilation, Room 9 appears deceptively smaller than its counterpart on the east side (see fig. 3.24). Room 10, which was even dimmer than the preceding chamber, was even further subdivided into smaller chambers (see fig. 3.25). Built out of the same "brick-like" stones

FIG. 3.26.
Entrance hall, looking toward Room 4, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.27.
Room 2, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

employed in the creation of the monastery's upper story, it is difficult to tell whether these represent a later subdivision or whether they were part of the original building. The pillars, which were of a rudimentary rucaka type rather than the elaborate ghaṭapallava type seen in Room 8, can still be seen in the room's corners. The pairing of two very different sets of spaces in equivalent positions on the monastery's east and west sides strikes a satisfying balance, while also pointing to a diversity of function built into the monastery's design. Whereas the open and airier chambers on the east side may have been intended for special ritual activities, possibly involving privileged visitors to the site, the comparatively darker and increasingly smaller rooms on the west side may have functioned as an area for respite.

The ground floor was completed by two parallel sets of rooms, accessible directly from the monastery's entry hall (Rooms 1–3 and 4–6) (fig. 3.26). Positioned in the northeast and northwest quadrants, respectively, these were the closest among the interior spaces to the monastery's main point of entry, and yet they were also among the most inconspicuous. They were set outside the tightly knit axial system that extended from the courtyard, and the doorways leading into each group from the front hall were noticeably smaller in scale than other entrances within the monastery.[23] Each side was equipped with a main, central chamber that provided access to two additional, smaller rooms. All the rooms, save one, were exceptionally dark and devoid of ornamentation. The exception was Room 2, in the far northeastern quadrant, which, like the monumental ceremonial hall off the courtyard (Room 7), was double-storied and brightly lit by windows set high on the east wall (fig. 3.27). Shelves set high on the room's north and south sides provided adequate space for storage; this may

FIG. 3.28.
Stairway in the entrance hall, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.29.
Upper front court, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

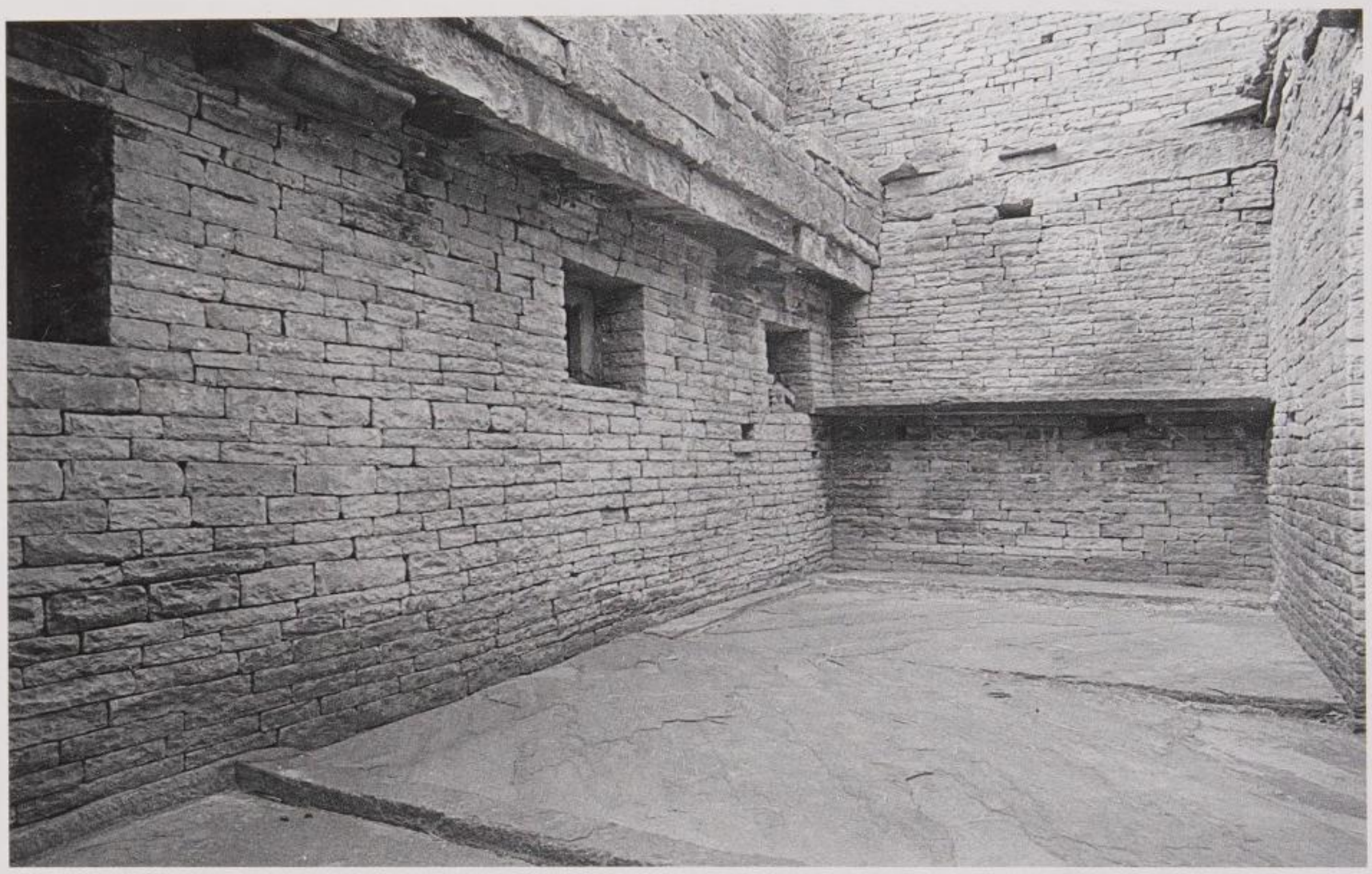
point to the chamber's function as a kitchen or a space for food preparation, appropriately sequestered far from the rest of the monastery's main rooms, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

If the monastery's ground story was dominated by rooms that could have accommodated a larger audience of visitors, including royals, travelers, and lay devotees, then the upper story appears to have formed a zone of more exclusive ritual and residential activity. Access was restricted to a narrow staircase, allowing for only single-file passage, that was partially concealed behind pilasters in the front hall (fig. 3.28). Although seemingly insignificant, the staircase was carefully accounted for in the monastery's plan, as seen most clearly in the scaling of the room directly to its west (Room 4), which is slightly smaller than its counterpart to the east, in order to maintain a bilateral symmetry of overall proportions, if not precisely of individual rooms.

The first space encountered after ascending the narrow passageway was a small but airy courtyard, supported by the standard set of vase-of-plenty pilasters topped by an entablature and projecting eave (chādya) ornamented with a sawtooth pattern (fig. 3.29). Like the entry hall below it, the upper front court was laid out along the monastery's north–south axis and enabled passage in all four

FIG. 3.30.
Room 13, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the southwest, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.31.
Room 14, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the southeast, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

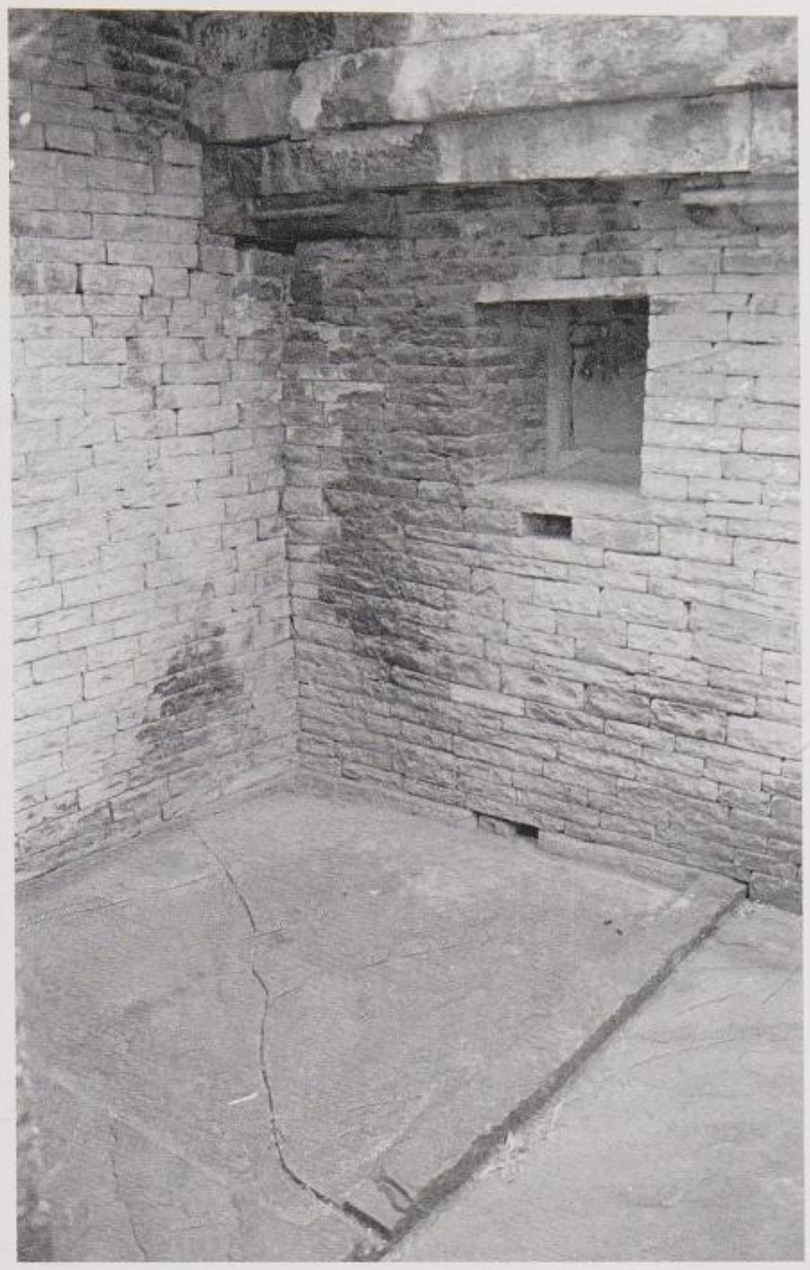


cardinal directions. To the east was a sizable square room (Room 12), equivalent in dimensions to Room 1 directly below. Just across to the west was a more elaborate set of rooms, set to the north and south, respectively, with windows to the west (figs. 3.30–3.32). In this set, a large, pillared chamber (Room 13) was accompanied by a smaller space likely intended for daily ritual bathing (Room 14), which had a shelf for storage and a basin for draining liquids. Because of their proximity to the front court, these rooms were well illuminated, particularly in comparison with their equivalents below.

Whereas the movement east and west directed the body into prominent residential spaces, the movement north and south constituted a more fundamental

FIG. 3.32.
View of the basin at the south side of Room 14, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.33.
Courtyard along the upper story, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.



passage between the upper story's inner and outer realms. Directly to the north, above the monastery's main entrance, would have once been the balcony space overlooking the entrance to the temple below, providing a point of permeability and visibility not present elsewhere in the building (see figs. 3.1, 3.29). Following directly to the south was the monastery's central courtyard, which, although similar in basic form, functioned very differently from its equivalent below (fig. 3.33). Rather than acting as a unifying space, it created an obstruction, directing passage not through the center but along the hallways encircling the open court (fig. 3.34). As a result, the movement through the upper story occurred not along the monastery's main axes, but rather around the main court, and often from room to room via interconnecting and adjoining doors. The simplest spaces were the two identical and narrow chambers (Rooms 15–16) encountered to the east and west immediately upon entering into the courtyard's ambit. Easily accessible and equipped with high shelves, these likely functioned as communal storage (fig. 3.35). Whereas the room on the east may have been connected to the rooms along the front hall, the one on the west began a longer passage through a complex sequence of interconnected chambers.

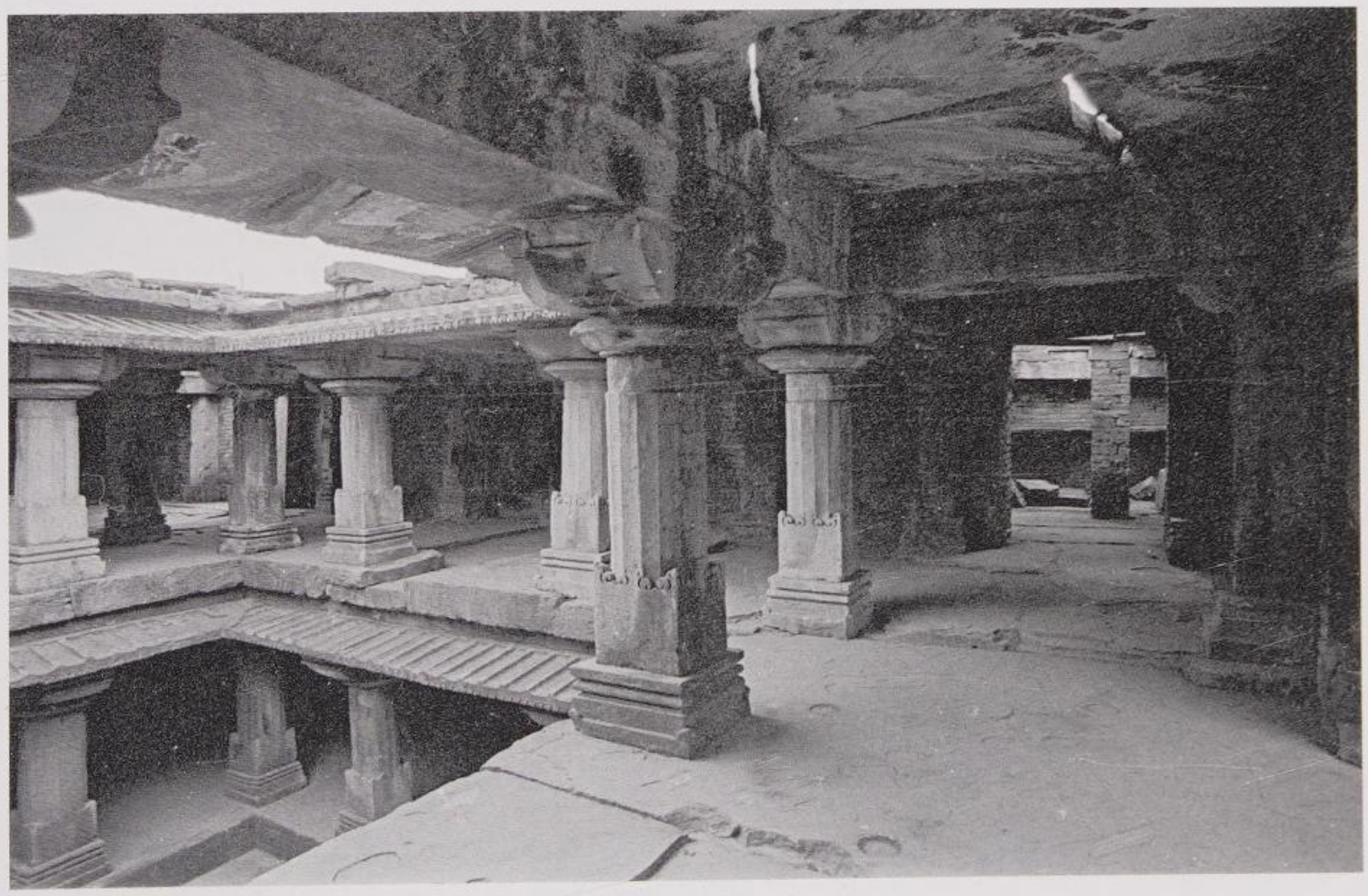


FIG. 3.34.
Eastern hall around the upper story courtyard, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

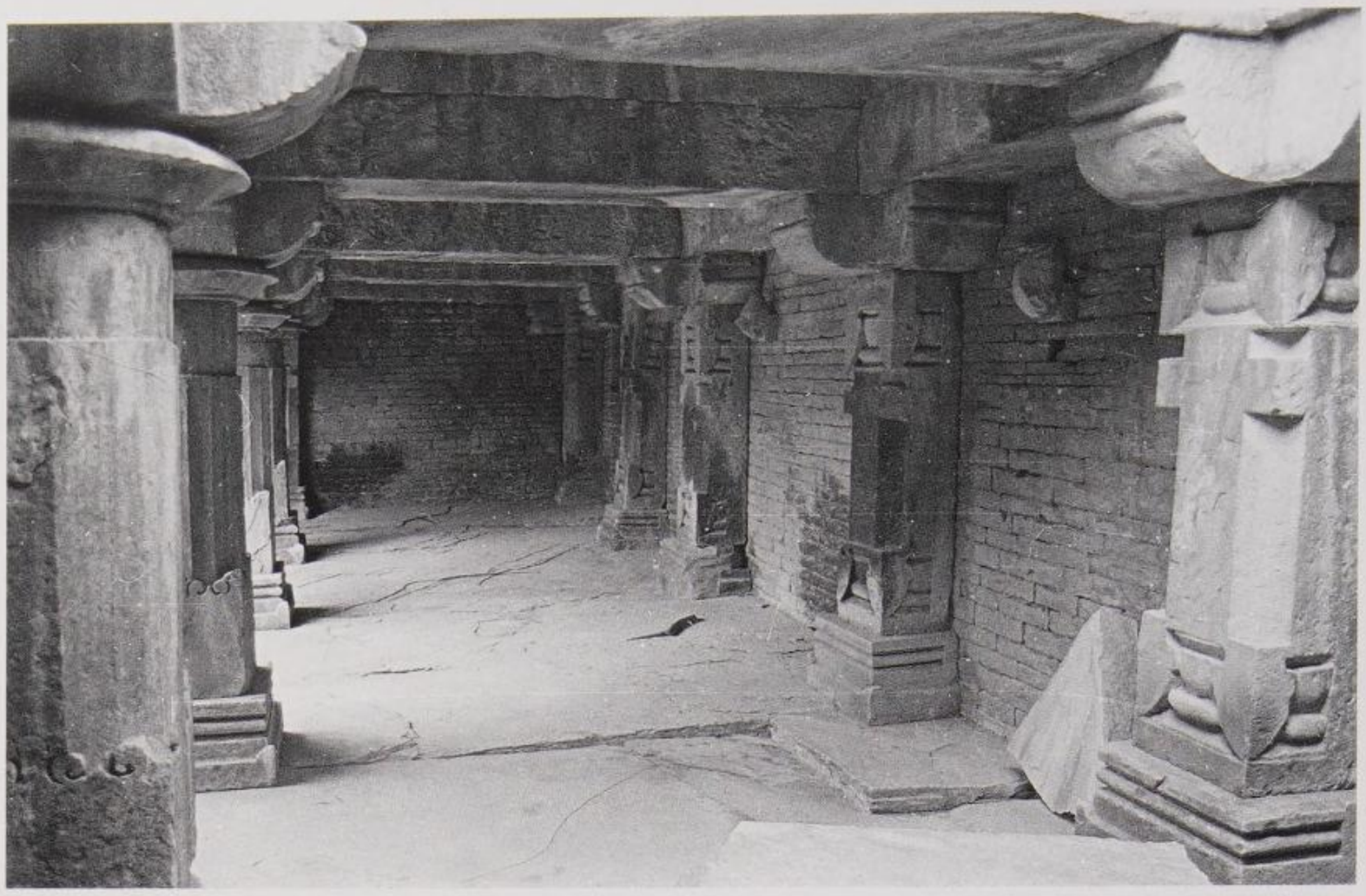


FIG. 3.35.
Room 16, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

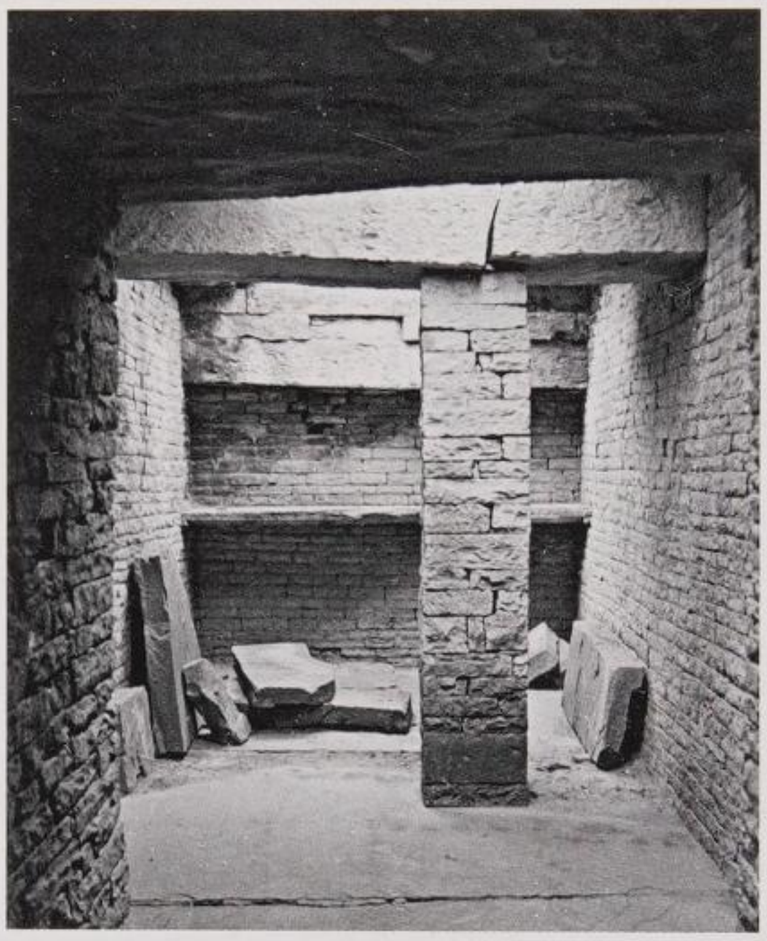
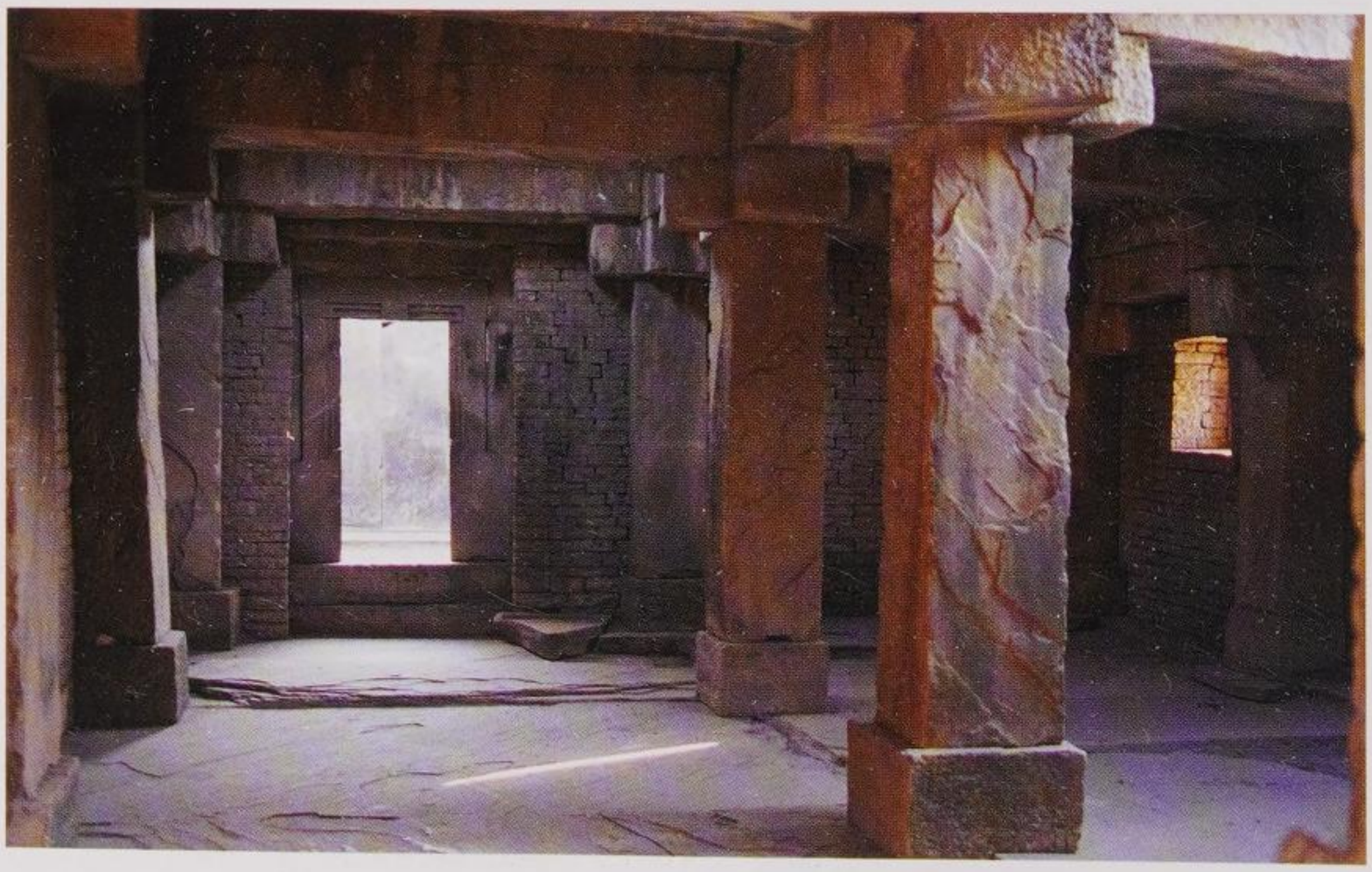
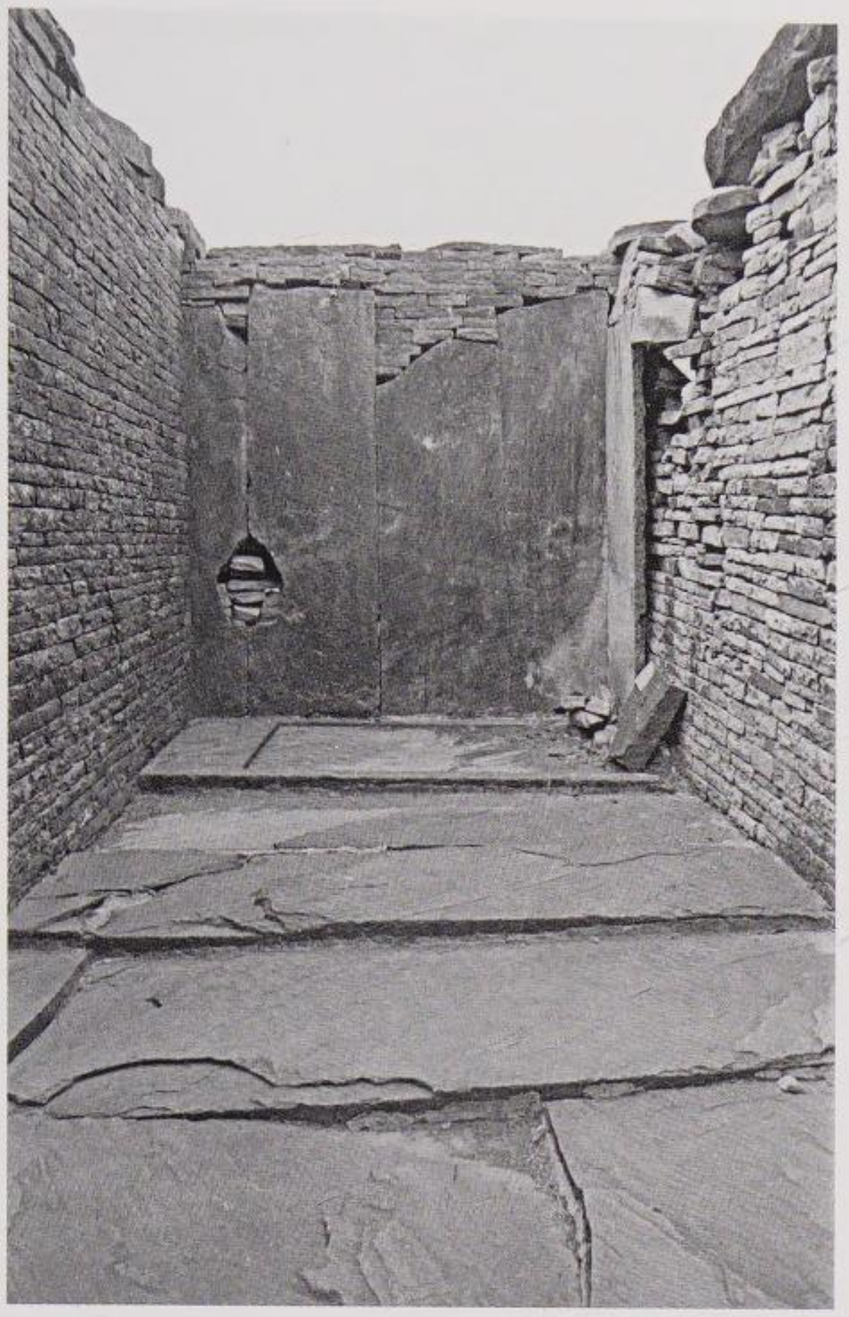


FIG. 3.36.
Room 17, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the north, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.





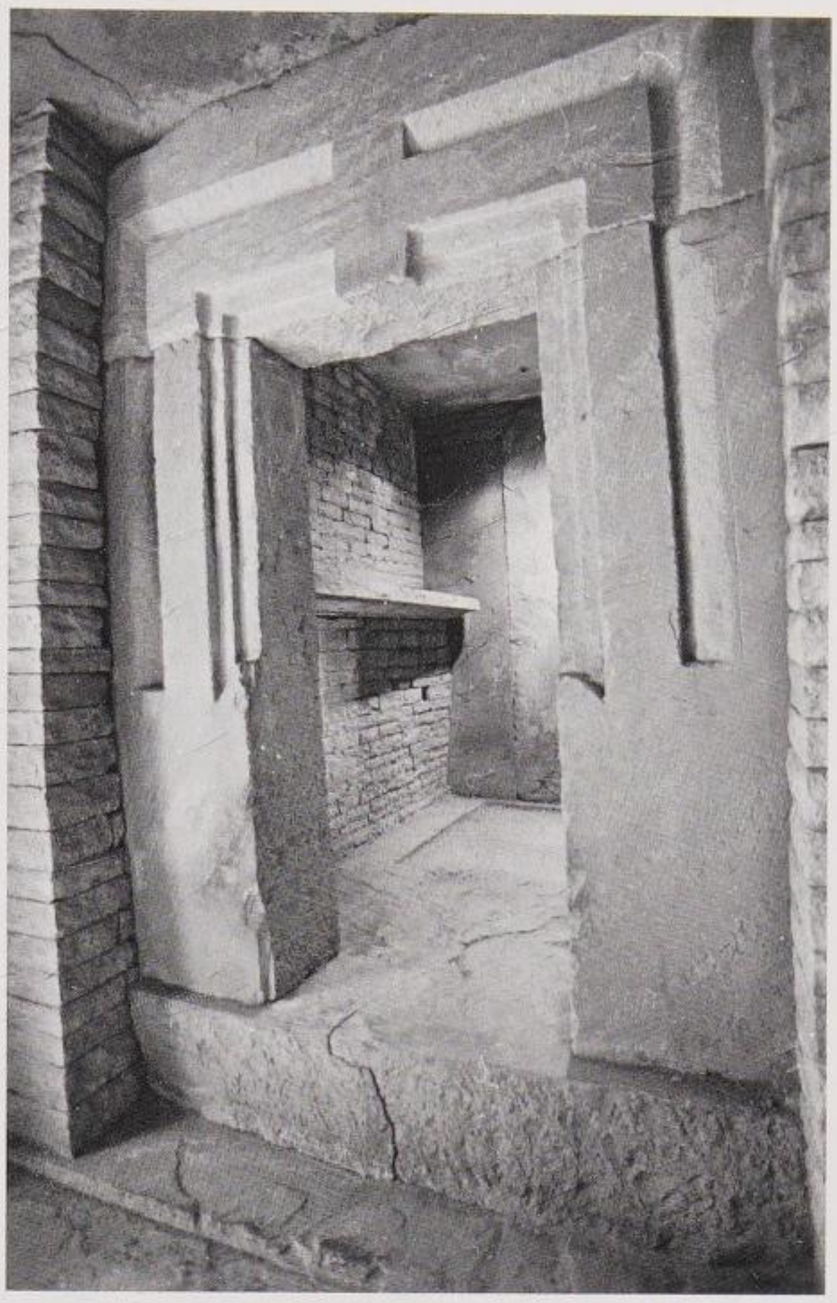


FIG. 3.37.
Room 18, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the north, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.38.
View into Room 20, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northwest, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

Dominating the center of the west wing was a large, twelve-pillared hall (Room 17) (fig. 3.36). Easily the most accessible space in the upper story, it had three entrances that led, respectively, to the storage area to the north, to the courtyard to the east, and to a cluster of three small chambers to the south (Rooms 18–20). Seemingly insignificant and sequestered deeply in a corner, this latter group of three small rooms is, nonetheless, among the most complex within the building. The first room (Room 18) was a bathing chamber, enterable from either the north or east, which was laid out following the exact same format as the bathing chamber in the first set of upper-story rooms, as described above (Room 14) (fig. 3.37). The other two (Rooms 19–20) formed a unit, with one serving as an antechamber to the other (fig. 3.38). Both had shelves for storage, which may have been used to store important items, and they may have been ritually significant, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

To the south of the courtyard was the upper story's largest room (Room 21), which today appears deceptively bright and open (fig. 3.39). However, in its original conception, it was both relatively dark and fully enclosed; the front wall that once divided it from the courtyard to the north is indexed through a row of paired pilasters that once flanked it on either side (fig. 3.40). The lighting, though dim, was significantly directed through a single small window positioned directly at the center of its rear wall. Entrance from the courtyard may have originally been possible through a central doorway, as in the case of the room directly below (Room 11). If that were the case, light streaming in from both the north and the south—through the entrance and window, respectively—would have visually emphasized passage along the main axis. In addition to being directly connected

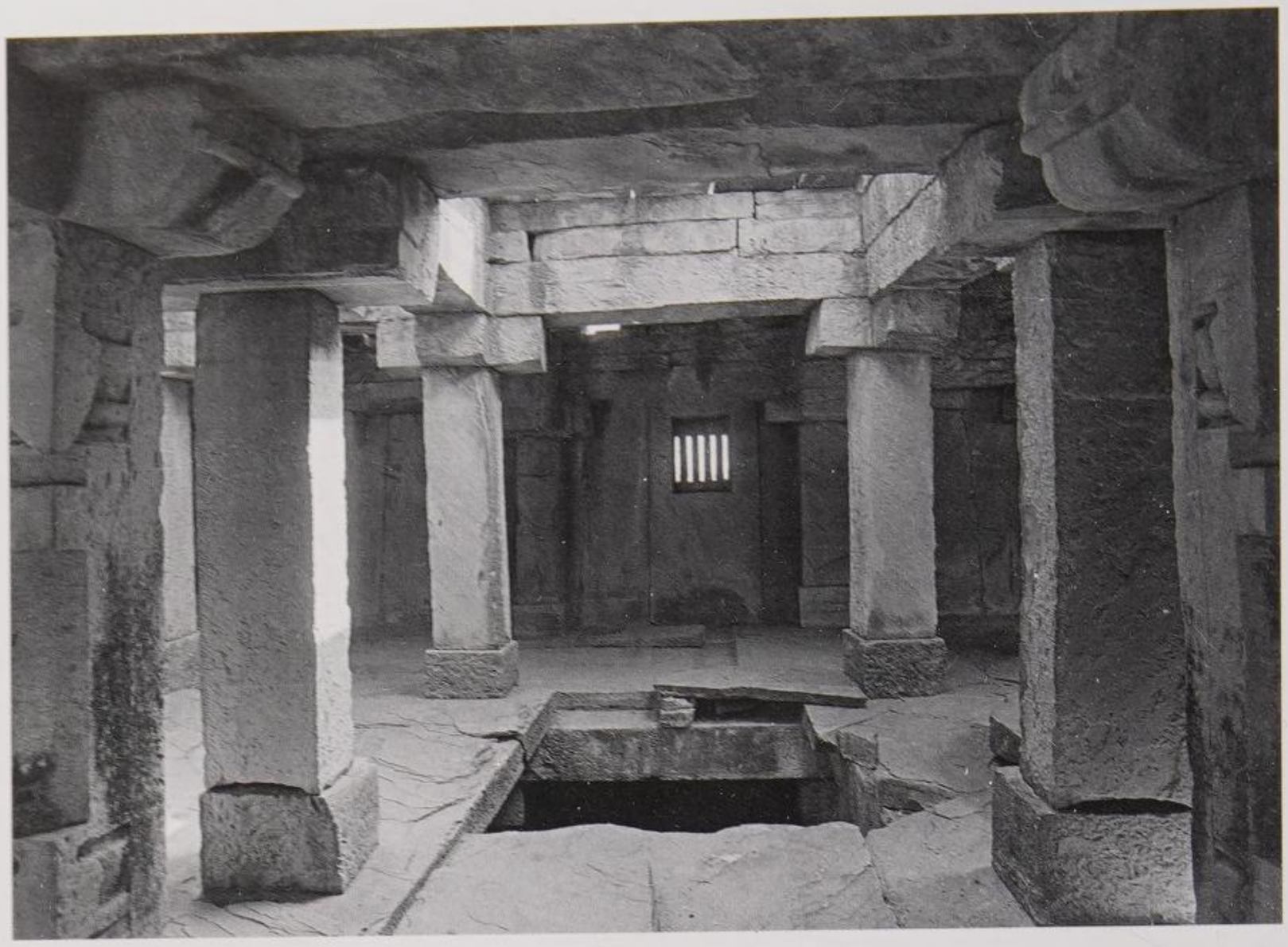
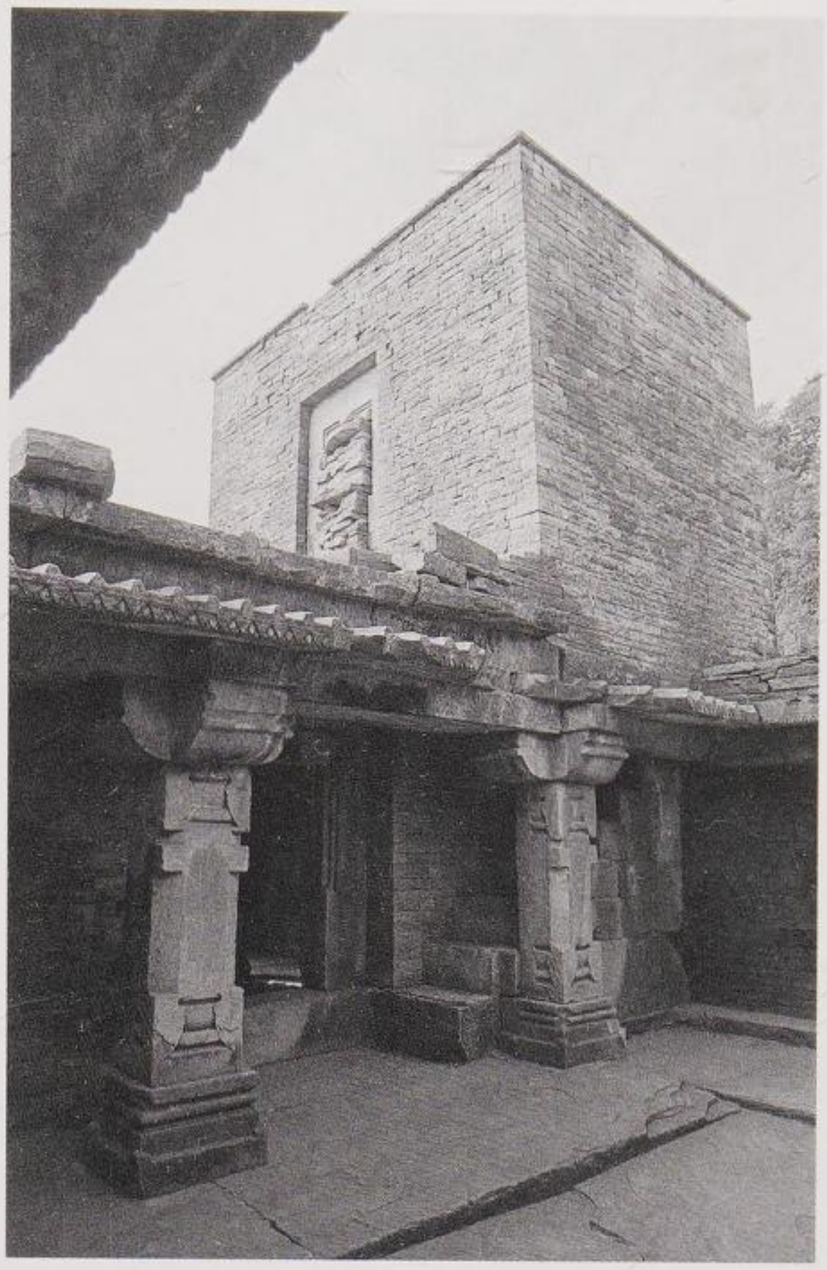


FIG. 3.39.
Room 21, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the north, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.40.
View of orphaned pilasters marking the transition from the courtyard to Room 21, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

to the bathing chamber and to its west (Rooms 18–20), Room 21 also provided exclusive access to the final room in the upper story's circuit, which was a sizable square chamber directly to the east (Room 22).

The monastery was finished with an elaborate roofing system, similar in basic structure to that at Ranod, but arranged differently in correspondence with the Kadwāhā plan (fig. 3.41). In the lowest tier, the roof slabs were laid perpendicularly to the central courtyard, so that rainwater would have flowed toward its opening. From there, the water would have been directed outward along the overhanging chādyas, built to shelter the halls below, and into the recessed floor of the



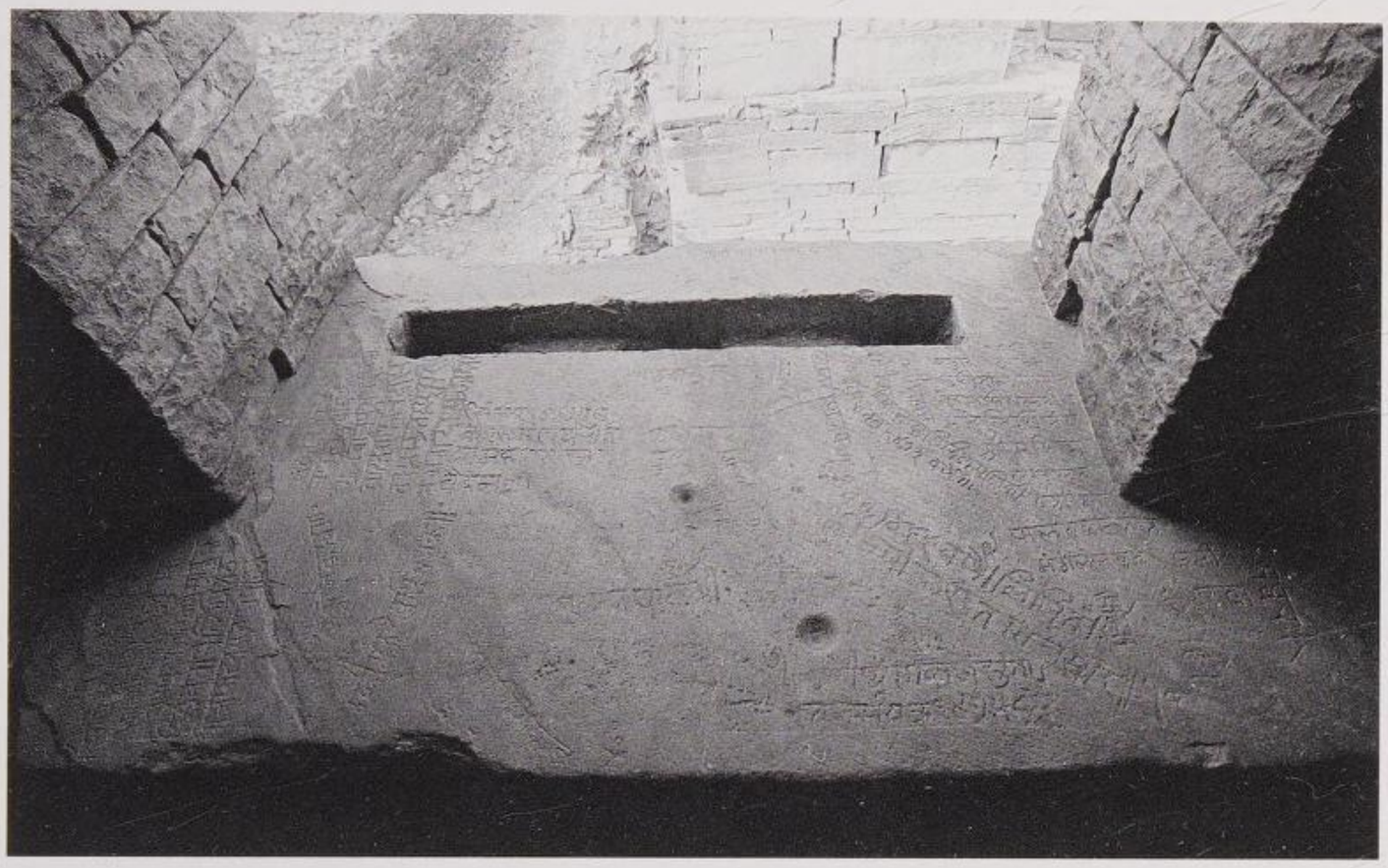


FIG. 3.41.
View of roof, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the southwest, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.42.
View of a room extending above the roof, c. 13th or 14th century AD. Seen from the southeast, Kadwāhā.

FIG. 3.43.
Windowsill in the room extending above the roof, c. 13th or 14th century AD. Monastery, Kadwāhā.

courtyard, which was designed with provisions for drainage, as is the case in courtyard-style homes, or havelis, today. Closer to the monastery's exterior facades, the upper roof was differently aligned, such that the pitch tapered downward from the center to the sides, adding to the formidable appearance and directing the flow of water downward and outward to the ground below.

Finally, projecting above the roof was a small, solitary room that acted like a lookout post or watchtower, reinforcing the notion of the monastery as fortress (fig. 3.42). Situated just off-center to the west, this room would have provided clear views of the landscape beyond the monastery's walls without disrupting the primacy of the north–south axis. A large window, once fitted with a heavy stone grate, framed the view to the north, while a door to the south gave easy rooftop access (fig. 3.43).[24] Certain aspects of this third-story room might suggest that it was a later addition. These include the fifteenth-century inscriptions scrawled on the windowsill and the fragmentary remains elsewhere along the roof of a larger third story, which was clearly added after the monastery's original foundation. However, the staircase is identical in both layout and construction to its counterpart below, and it was likely part of the original plan.[25]

The monastery at Kadwāhā remains as immensely important today as it once was, in no small part for the simple reason that it remains one of the few surviving dwellings that were conceived largely at a single moment. Once made potent

through its function as an abode for ascetics, today it powerfully indexes their long-forgotten presence. On the one hand, the "fortress-like" nature of the heavy exterior walls was highly appropriate as a marker of a monastic community with inhabitants who drew their power through the exclusivity of their practices. On the other hand, the complex spatial program that is revealed through the unfolding of the interior indicates a high degree of institutionalization in the shape of daily actions. This was a monastery that is easily reimaginable as a royal religious center, a site where the resident guru may have been attended upon by kings, like Harirāja of Buḍhi Chanderī and his successors, who came bearing great gifts in exchange for initiation, and who continued to patronize the monastery and its temple through the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries.[26]

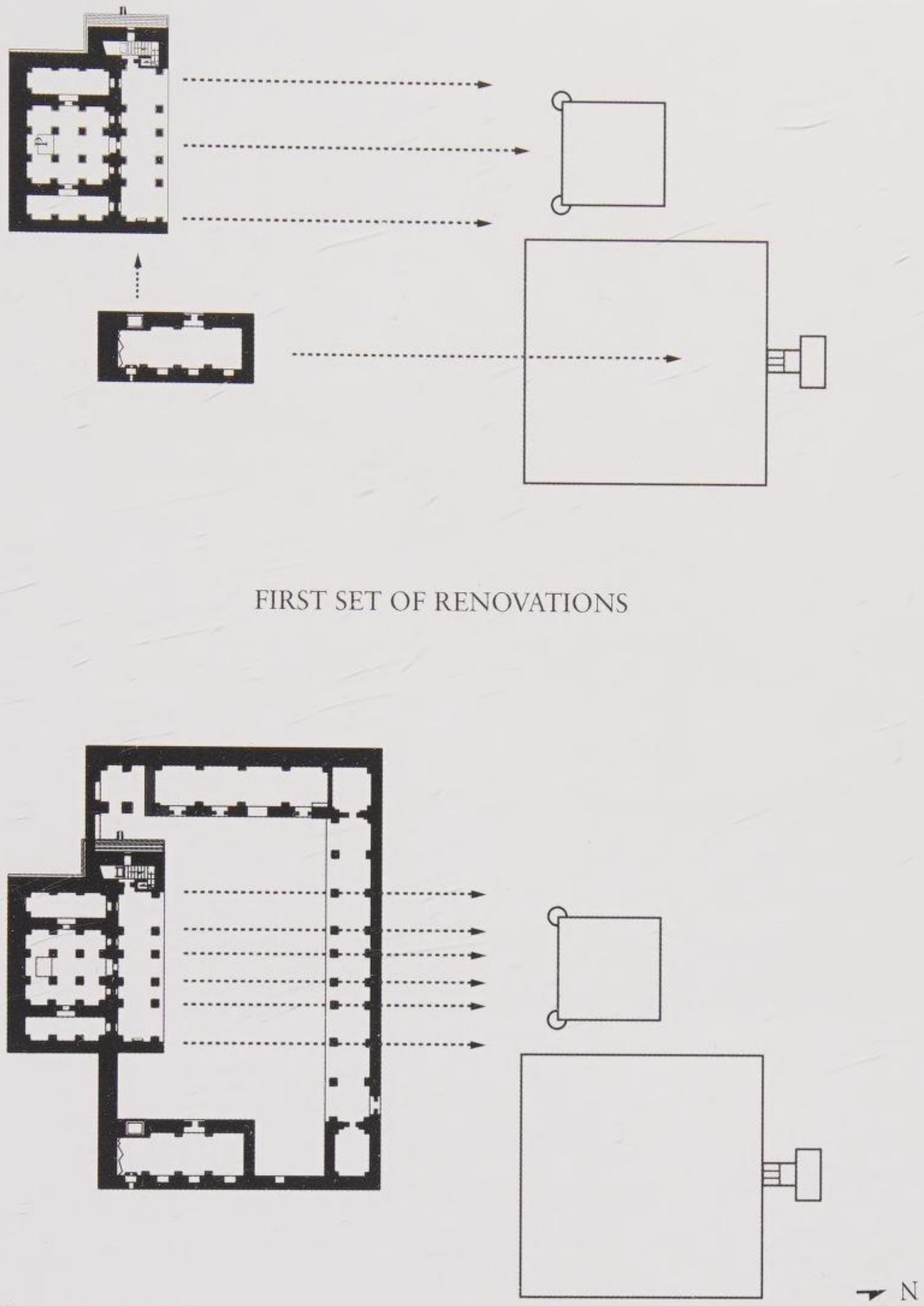
Renovating a Wilderness Retreat

The emergence of Kadwāhā as a major institutional center seems to have had a significant impact on the resident Mattamayūra monastic community at Ranod. At approximately the same moment, or perhaps a few decades later, Ranod's hermitage was vastly expanded, largely through the auspices of a sage named Vyomaśiva, who commissioned the inscription at the site to commemorate his interventions. According to the inscription, Ranod had fallen under bad times, and Vyomaśiva is credited with having returned good fortune to the town and prosperity to the monastery by his "good fame" and the "power of his austerities [*tapas*]."[27] In addition to restoring the prestige of the place, Vyomaśiva is credited with bringing the monastery, which "had become old and in disrepair," to a state of such wealth and prosperity that it "[shone] again with new light, with great masses of grain, gold and jewels, with prancing tall horses, and with roaring, rutting war elephants."[28] In addition to renewing the monastery, Vyomaśiva is credited with constructing a step-well (described by both the terms "vāpī" and "kuṇḍa") with gardens, and at least one temple with images of Śiva, Umā-Devī, and Gaṇeśa.[29]

A second inscription, held currently in the collection of the Gwalior Museum, appears to have functioned as a continuation of Vyomaśiva's story. Commissioned by Vyomaśiva's successor, a sage named Patañgaśambhu, it records the construction of several new monuments at a monastic site. According to the inscription, Patañgaśambhu built a large Śiva temple "with a beautiful peak which is magnificent all around, white like the radiance of the moon, like Mount Kailāśa," five "enormous" tanks, a surrounding wall (prākāra), and some orchards or gardens.[30] Unfortunately, the Gwalior Museum inscription remains both without provenance and badly damaged, so it is impossible to know for sure whether it was indeed once at Ranod. However, given how closely its content mirrors that of the Ranod inscription—simply put, the first half of Patañgaśambhu's inscription reads like a close synopsis of Vyomaśiva's earlier text at Ranod—it seems likely that Ranod was its point of origin.

At the level of built form, the expansions and renovations described in the inscriptional record correspond exceedingly well with the architectural material at the site. Vyomaśiva's vāpī is likely the prominent step-well standing to the northeast

FIG. 3.44.
Hypothetical order of renovations at Ranod.



of the original building, and Patañgaśambhu's prākāra may be the enclosure wall that encircled the monastery and its extended wings (fig. 3.44). The latter is particularly suggested by the location of Vyomaśiva's inscription on the veranda of the original dwelling, presently subsumed within the monastery's open-air court, rather than along the exterior of the building that stands today. The placement of Vyomaśiva's inscription in the interior rather than the exterior of the monastery suggests that the enclosure came later. Patañgaśambhu's inscription, on the other hand, may well have been positioned outside the expanded dwelling, either affixed to a temple, as V. V. Mirashi has suggested, or possibly near the new entrance to the monastery, where it could have been easily seen by anyone visiting the site.[31] It may be that the act of enclosing Vyomaśiva's inscription required the close repetition of its content that is found in Patañgaśambhu's inscription. Together, these additions,

FIG. 3.45.
View of the open courtyard, showing the southeast corner building and the original hermitage, c. 9th–11th century AD. Seen from the west, monastery, Ranod.

which are traceable in the wall moldings of the prākāra, subsumed Purandara's original building, while simultaneously quadrupling the size of the monastic residence and establishing a variety of new functional spaces within its interior.

To Vyomaśiva may be attributed a freestanding chamber built to the north and east of the original hermitage (fig. 3.45). This building is of particular interest for a number of reasons. The first is its visual prominence: it was a sizable independent building carefully positioned in relationship to both older and newer parts of the building. It was carefully positioned on a north–south axis with the step-well, and also on an east–west axis with the veranda of the original building (see fig. 3.44). The window along the south of the west wall, in particular, was aligned directly with Vyomaśiva's inscription. The second notable quality was its likely ritual function, either as a room for ritual ablutions (abhiṣekaḥ) or as a chamber for charitable feeding (*sattra*), as will be discussed later in this chapter. Its high ceiling made its already sizable plan feel grander, while storage niches built into the side wall could have held supplies, manuscripts, and possibly ritual implements (fig. 3.46). Along the south side of the room, ample provisions were taken for both the storage of water and for the drainage of poured water. A sink or small tank, set deeply into a windowsill along the west wall, served as a repository for water, while a stone basin and a drain set down beside it, against the building's back wall, were designed to direct the flow of water out of the monastery (figs. 3.47, 3.48). The presence of a broken circular grindstone, very similar to the kind

FIG. 3.46.
Interior of the southeast corner building, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the north, monastery, Ranod.

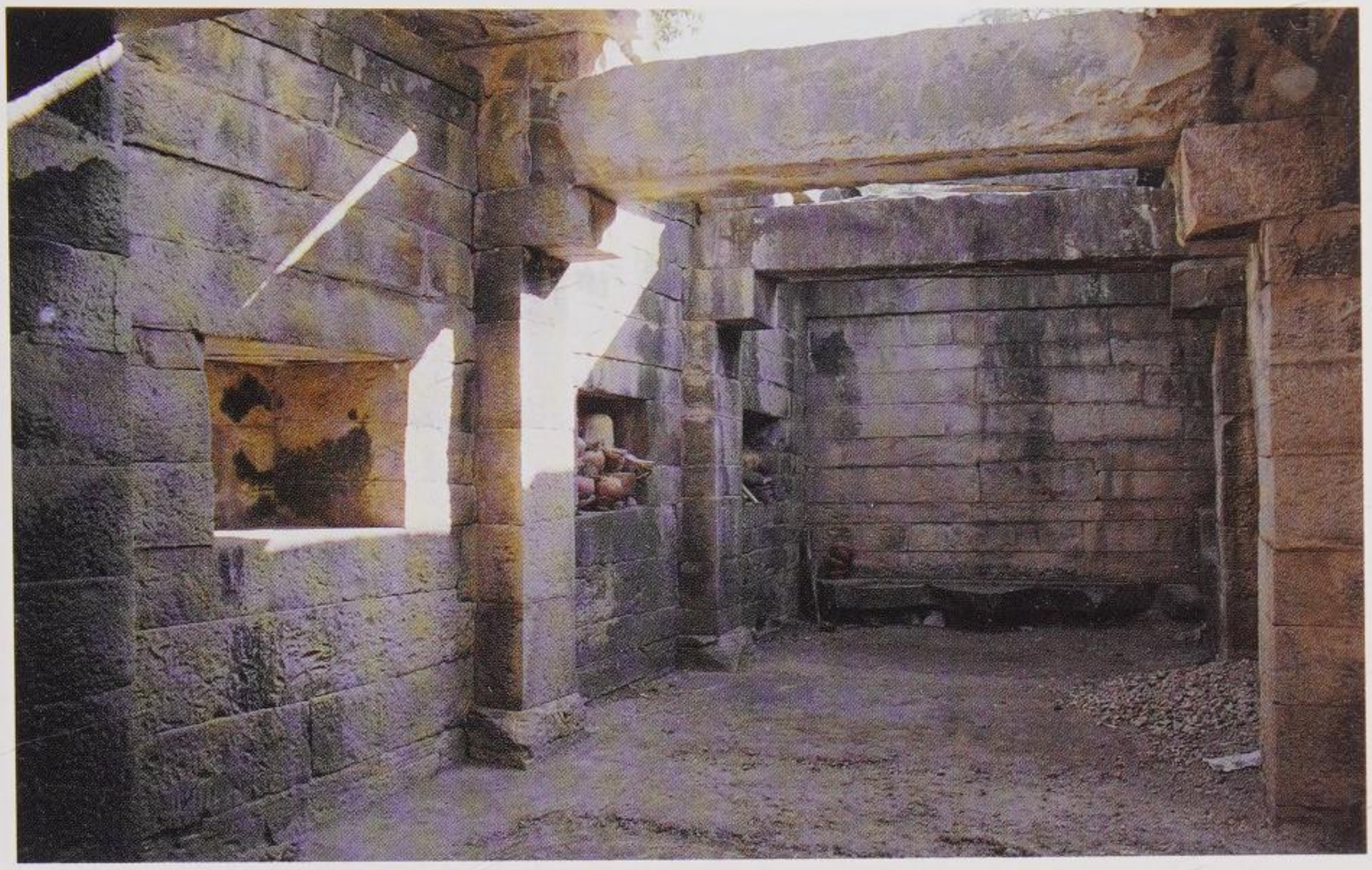


FIG. 3.47.
View of a sink or small water tank set into the windowsill of the southeast corner building, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the east, monastery, Ranod.

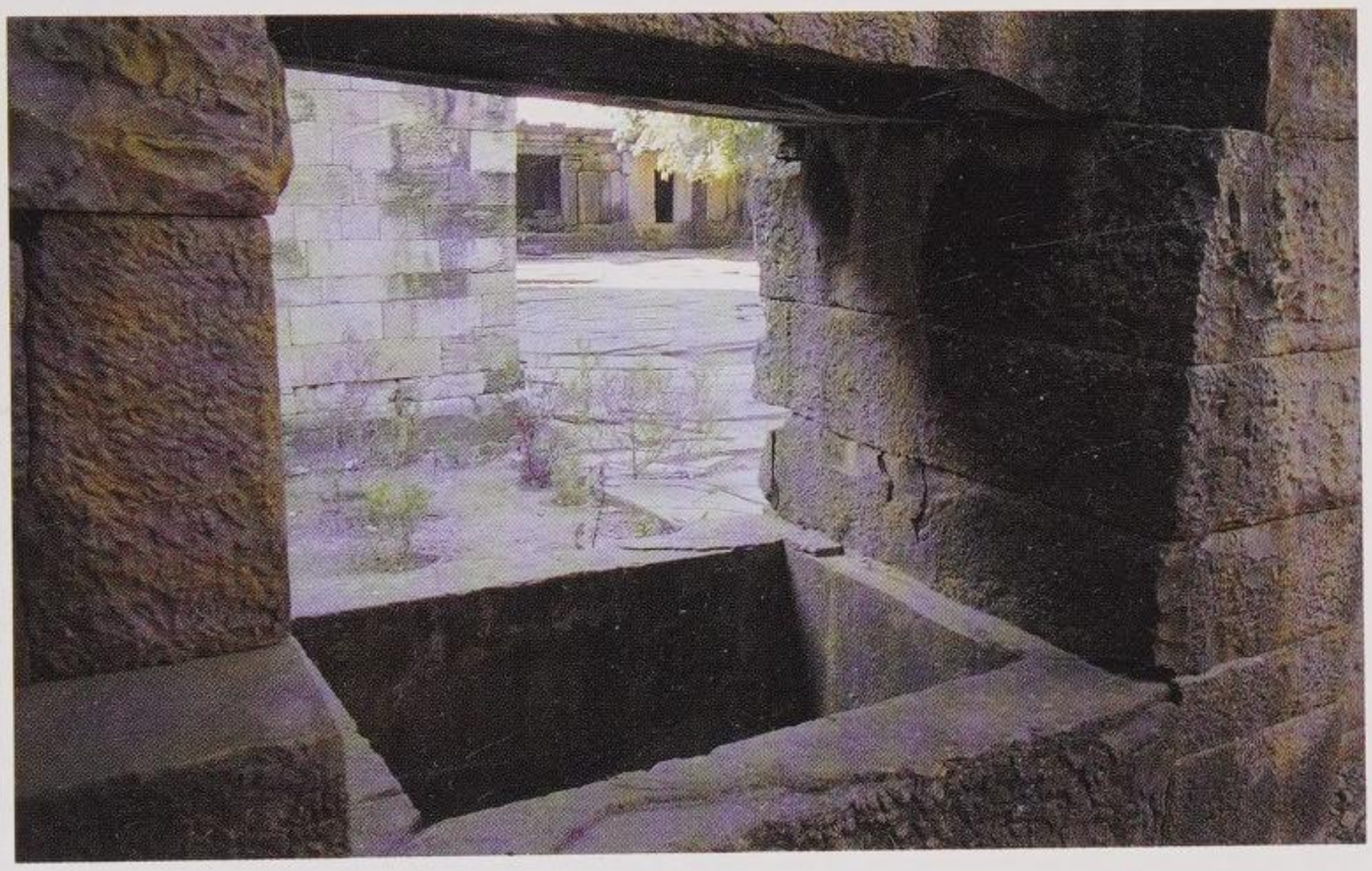


FIG. 3.48.
View of the drain, niche, and remains of a basin, situated along the south side of the interior of the southeast corner building, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the west, monastery, Ranod.

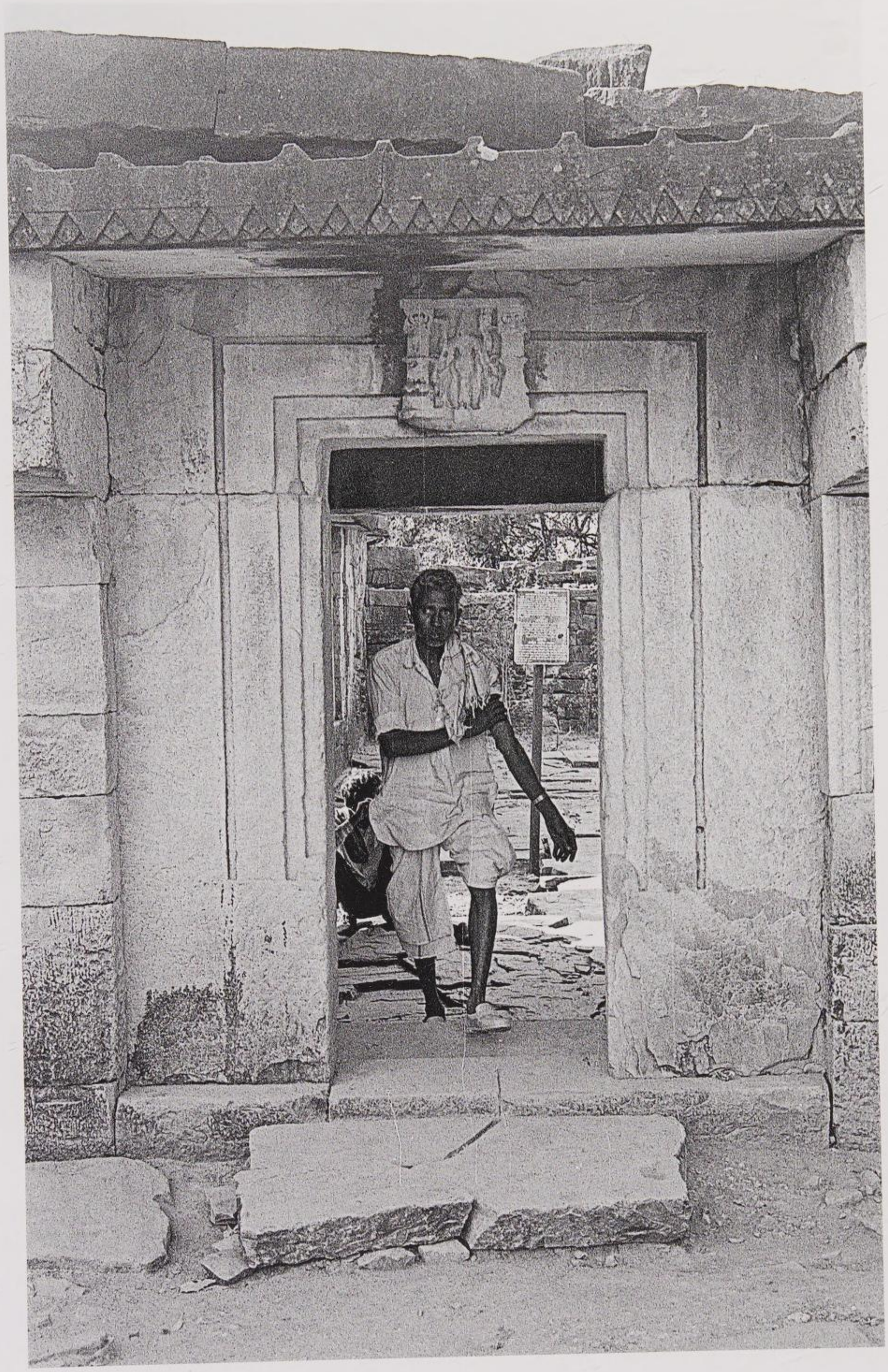
FIG. 3.49.
Overview of the monastery, c. 9th–11th century AD. Seen from the northeast, Ranod.

used in villages today, suggests that, at some point in its history, the chamber may have been converted into a space for food preparation.

The prākāra that may be attributable to Patañgaśambhu marked an even greater expansion. Not only did it significantly increase the internal dimensions of the monastery, but it also transformed a permeable and open space into a sacred and interiorized space (fig. 3.49). The new entrance was adorned with a four-armed deity, flanked by attendants on the center of the door lintel leading into the building (fig. 3.50). Although the figure is now badly defaced, it is of great significance for reasons of both iconography and style. Stylistically, it helps to place the new wall and doorway in the late tenth or early eleventh century.[32] Iconographically, it notably marked the space beyond as sanctified. Just beyond this new entrance was a long, sheltered veranda with animal head ornaments set high along its wall (figs. 3.51, 3.52). At its east and west corners were two small rooms, both of which may have been ideally suited for storage; they are currently filled with piles of firewood and rubble. The west wing, by contrast, was dominated by a large longitudinal room, accessible through four doorways, equally spaced according to the distribution of internal bays (figs. 3.53, 3.54). It may be that these were partitioned into individual cubicles, not unlike Room 10 in the southwest corner of the monastery at Kadwāhā, although it is impossible to know for sure. Just to the south of this room, in the southwestern corner of the enlarged monastic complex and next to the original monastery building, was a small, semi-open enclave framed by pillars that may have served as a shaded space for small meetings or individual activity.

In both inscriptions, Vyomaśiva and Patañgaśambhu are credited not only with expanding the monastery's interior but also with making additions to the larger site. In the first, Vyomaśiva is credited with constructing a step-well (kuṇḍa or vāpī) surrounded by gardens and at least three temples. In the second, Patañgaśambhu

FIG. 3.50.
Entrance to the monastery, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the north, monastery, Ranod.



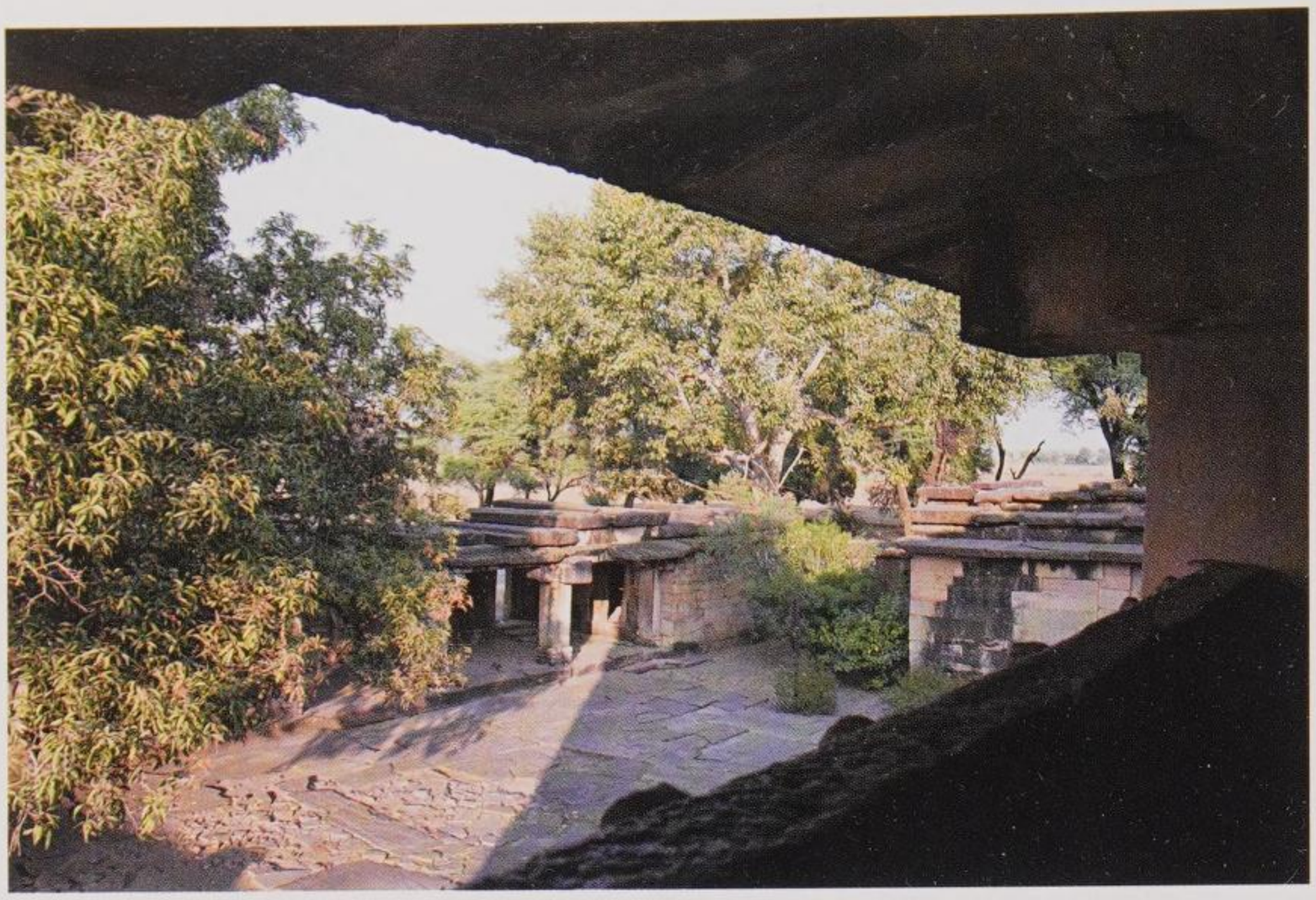


FIG. 3.51.
View across the open courtyard from the upper story veranda of the original hermitage, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southwest, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.52.
Northern veranda, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the east, monastery, Ranod.

is said to have built a large Śiva temple, as many as five tanks, and some orchards and gardens, presumably beyond the boundaries of the prākāra wall. Of these richly described additions, only the step-well (vāpī) likely built by Vyomaśiva still remains standing at the site, just to the north of the monastery's present-day entrance, also as noted above (fig. 3.55). Any traces of the temples built by Vyomaśiva, Patañgaśambhu, or any of the monastery's denizens over the generations no longer stand today. A solitary stone *āmalaka* (cog-wheel-shaped ribbed fruit) that would have once served as a finial element atop a tall temple still rests between the monastery and the tank, and several reused stone pillars can still be easily found throughout the village; the rest survives only in the form of a few scattered fragments, primarily in the vicinity of the monastery today (figs. 3.49, 3.56).

FIG. 3.53.
View of the open courtyard and western wing, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the east, monastery, Ranod.

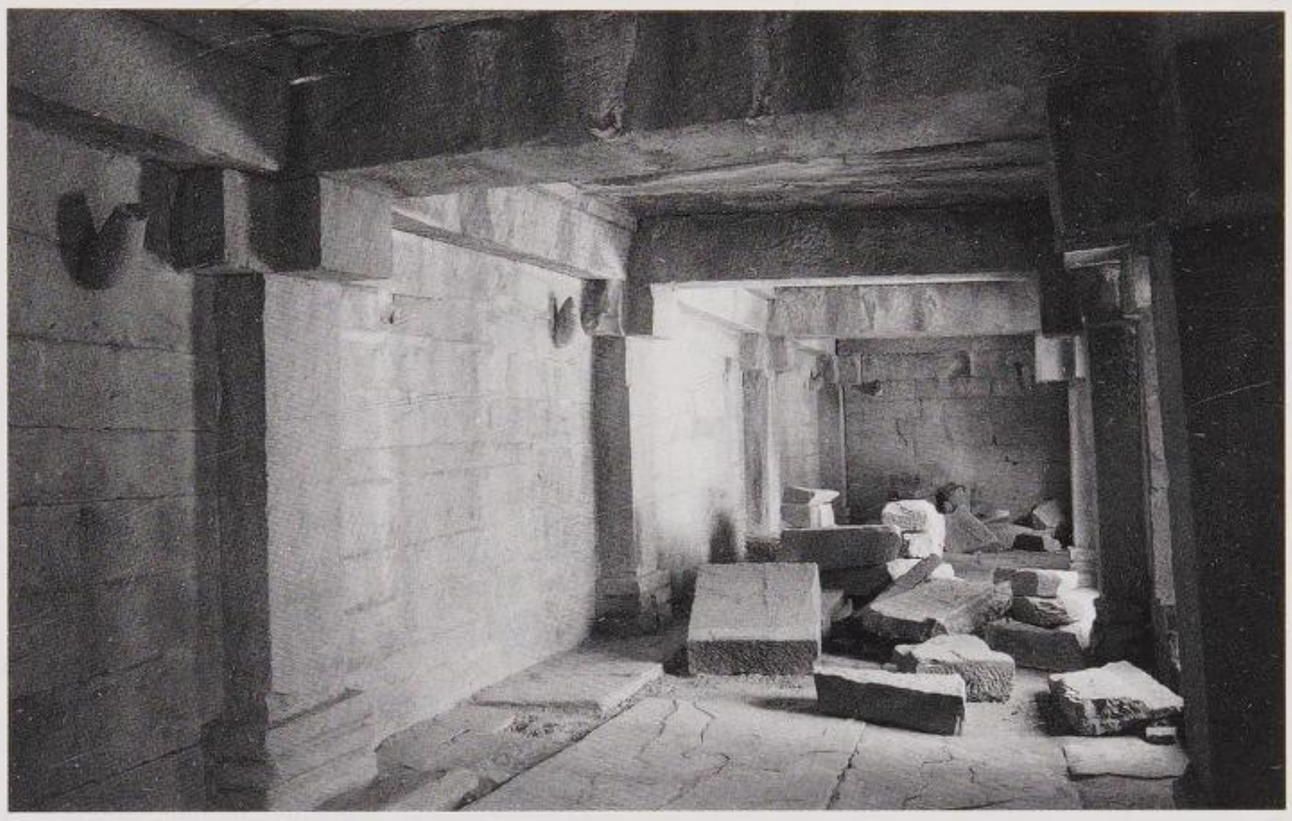


FIG. 3.54.
Interior of the room to the west of the open court, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the south, monastery, Ranod.

FIG. 3.55.
Step-well to the north of the monastery, c. late 10th or early 11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, Ranod.

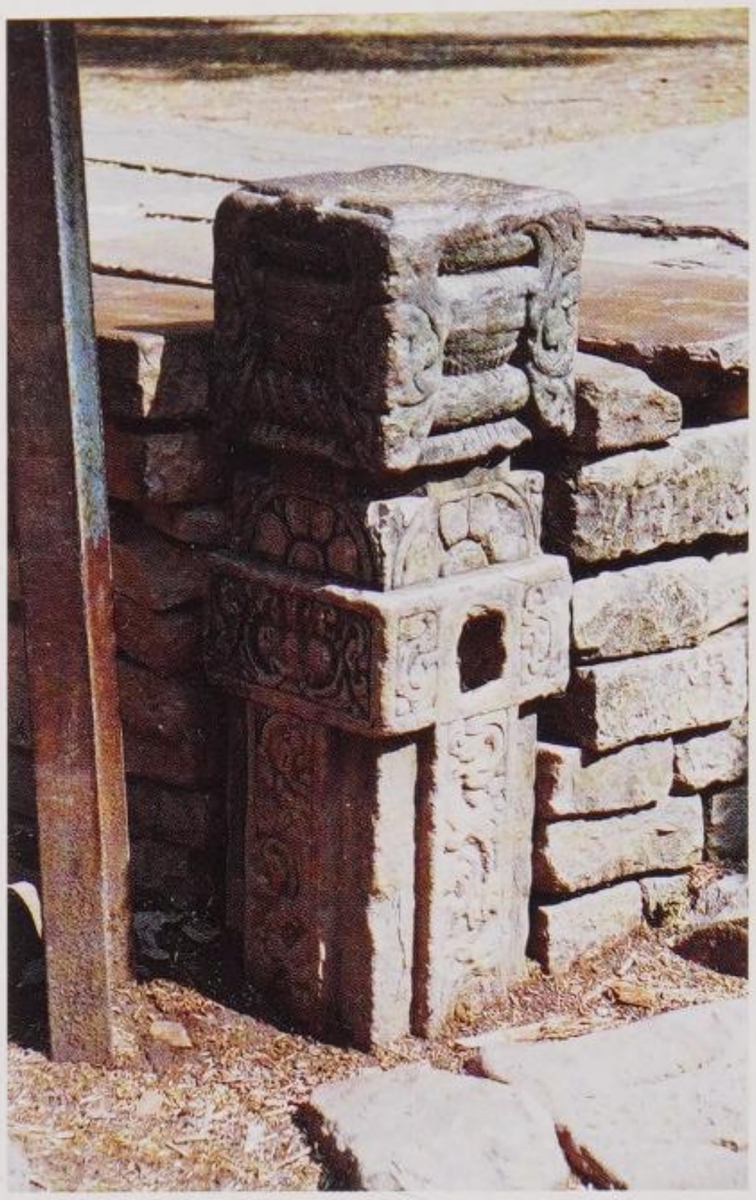


FIG. 3.56.
Temple fragment reused near a house near the monastery, c. 10th century AD. Ranod.

Despite the fact that the temples no longer stand, the inscriptional verses suggest that they were situated in close proximity to the tank and also to gardens, with which they were likely interwoven as an integrated structural unit. The inscription commissioned by Vyomaśiva is particularly evocative in this respect, as it variously brings together temples, tanks, and gardens as a unified poetic trope. The step-well is described variously as "a tank with pure temples and with gardens," as a "tank [vāpī] of Lord Śiva," and as "a place where the peacock makes his abode, that is the supreme abode of bliss (made) lovely with palatial buildings and old shrines suitable for Śiva."[33] In another set of verses, the temples are referred to as "a garland of palatial buildings [prāsāda]" whose reflections can be seen in the tank in the moonlight, and "just as the ocean shines with high icy mountains along its shore, the (pond) shines with high houses of the gods."[34]

While certainly metaphorical, such descriptions were rooted in real building practices, such as those seen at contemporary Śaiva sites, where step-wells of varying scales appeared in close vicinity to larger temple complexes. In most cases, small subsidiary shrines (*devakulikās*) encircled their banks, and sometimes a single *sarvatobhadra* shrine, open on all four sides, sheltered a stone liṅga surrounded by water in the tank's center (fig. 3.57). It is possible that the verses in Vyomaśiva's inscription may have been meant to evoke not merely a string of unconnected buildings, but rather a group consisting of one or more temples that stood similarly by the step-well's banks. Although no foundation markings for any of Ranod's temples are presently visible around the monastery site, it is possible that a later, sultanate-era tomb—occupying an even square (approximately 28.9 by 28.9 feet, or 8.8 by 8.8 meters) just to the west of the step-well—may stand on or near the site of an older shrine, which may have stood not only on axis with the monastery's central rooms but also in close proximity to the tank (fig. 3.58).[35]

Despite the expansions undertaken by Vyomaśiva and his successors, the monastery at Ranod remained an enclave for ascetic activity, very much in contrast with Kadwāhā's visible function as a central urban institution. Ranod's smaller size and greater distance from a larger residential core should not be seen as signifying a lesser importance. In fact, Ranod most likely continued to exert significant influence as a true source of ascetic power—a hermitage in the forest where aspirants could achieve remove from society, where the most serious austerities could be performed, and where the highest ritual knowledge was likely disseminated. The agent of the most extensive renovations, the guru Vyomaśiva, was no doubt a dynamic leader, praised in inscriptions for his spiritual wisdom,

FIG. 3.57.
Step-well and Śiva temple, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the west, Baroli (Baḍoli), Rajasthan.

FIG. 3.58.
View of a later Islamic tomb (right) and cenotaphs (left) built at the bank of the stepped well, possibly on an older temple foundation, c. 14th or 15th century AD. Monastic site, Ranod.

his knowledge and conquest of other religious traditions, and his ability to bring students to liberation. But first and foremost he was hailed continually as a supreme ascetic who had become powerful by accumulating fiery spiritual heat (tapas) generated through the performance of austerities. Kadwāhā, by contrast, was a site that likely exerted a greater degree of worldly power; it functioned as the necessary counterpart to Ranod, the place where the guru became rājaguru to newly emergent kings.

In this light, it is significant that while Kadwāhā's monastery demonstrates the potential of stone as a medium to create a fortress-like appearance, Ranod's

hermitage conveyed the notion of a forest retreat (āśrama) through its allusions to wooden architecture, even after the numerous renovations that expanded the scope of the site. Compared to Kadwāhā, it focused not inward, toward the austere residential spaces, but outward, toward the lushness of the surrounding landscape, which would have been immanently visible on the outskirts of town. The openness was retained even through the addition of new buildings and the creation of an enclosing wall in the late tenth or early eleventh century, through the continuing visibility of the upper story of the original building's veranda, and also through the airiness of the internal courtyard; the later expansions had the effect of enlarging the monastic residence, while retaining the idea of living in the open forest. The result was a calculated contrast between the masonic approach to building at Kadwāhā, which expressed an impenetrable interiority, and the openness of the building at Ranod, which, through its emulation of wood in its ornamentation, gestured toward the notion of an idyllic shelter for forest-dwelling sages.[36]

The Shape of Monastic Space

Although different in many ways, the monasteries at Kadwāhā and Ranod share at least one major point in common—they both demonstrate a complexity in their layout and design that moves far beyond the notion of a functional refuge or a rudimentary home for eremitical ascetics seeking repose from worldly existence. Rather, the variations in room type and size, in lighting and ventilation, and in the grouping and orientation of smaller, peripheral rooms in relationship to larger, centralized areas suggest that the buildings were carefully designed to accommodate the daily requirements of a formalized and hierarchized monastic way of life.

In the following two sections, I work toward recapturing some sense for how monasteries may have shaped, and been shaped by, the movements and human actions that once animated their now-static spaces. To do so, I look at architecture in relation to a range of inscriptional records and surviving Śaiva Siddhānta ritual texts. As noted earlier in this chapter, looking to textual sources to understand architecture is not without problems, as Adam Hardy has most recently shown in the case of Indian temples.[37] It is possible, nonetheless, to sketch out the general contours of practice within the surviving architectural spaces or, at the very least, to get some sense for the range of possible ways in which architecture may have structured certain kinds of action. Here, the formalization of the architecture seen at Kadwāhā and Ranod may be understood as a counterpart to the systematization of ritual texts that was occurring at approximately the same historical moment. Whereas the creation of new ritual compendia was aimed at establishing a cohesive religious system, the development of new types of monastic dwellings may reflect not merely a process of homogenization at the level of artistic practice and craft but also a much more important—and conscious—effort at regulating the structure of daily monastic life.

I begin my exploration by laying out ways in which movements and actions can be read through architectural forms. On the most fundamental level, architecture as a medium is inherently linked to the human body, with which it

carries a deeply indexical relationship. Just as the walls of any building are scaled to the human body, so too can the space contained therein be understood as "sculpted" by the movements of its many inhabitants. The shape of movements and actions leave residual traces on their architectural environments that can be felt on many levels, ranging from scale and orientation to fine details of ornamentation, patterns of interlocking spaces, and relative distance and degrees of access between any two points within the building. The arrangement of interior spaces can be understood as a spatial syntax, operating through static plans or programs and also through degrees of permeability and connectivity, measured in terms of the integration of rooms—determined, in part, by the number of turns or movements required to get from one part of the building to another.[38]

The shape of daily movements and actions at Ranod and Kadwāhā can be traced in a number of different ways. The most straightforward is through the layout and structure of the monastery as a designed monument, possessing fixed dimensions and oriented in relation to real or absolute space. Following this approach, the monastery might be best described as a building that is approximately but not quite square, that faces north, and that is plotted in alignment with the cardinal directions. The north–south axis seems particularly significant in both the design and distribution of spaces, which appear to sustain a bilateral symmetry—at least in plan, if not always in elevation. At both sites, this north–south axis directed movement through the center of the building, in the process also revealing a bilateral symmetry. The east–west axis was similarly significant, at least at Kadwāhā, where it further subdivided the building into four equal quadrants, while also establishing key relationships among the other groups of rooms around the central courtyard.

This way of assessing the monastery is useful in thinking of the building as a stable monument fixed in real space. However, the monastery's most important meanings came not through the stasis of its forms, but rather through the complexity of its interlocking spaces, which fostered the multiplicity of nonlinear movements typical of daily life. The dynamism of the monastery as a living environment was built through the relationships among rooms, which can be assessed in at least two distinct ways.

The first involves following the movement through the monastery as a passage from exterior to interior, or from the outside world inward through increasingly secluded sets of residential spaces. In this way of thinking, one might artfully employ access-analysis diagrams to determine degrees of accessibility from the exterior of the monastery, measured through the number of spaces required to pass through in order to enter into a given room, with smaller numbers indicating greater accessibility (fig. 3.59). From this vantage point, it becomes immediately clear that the upper-story rooms were often the least accessible. At Kadwāhā, for example, they required, at a minimum, three or more movements, and sometimes as many as eight. In the terms used by social anthropologists, degrees of accessibility and inaccessibility can be equated with variously public and private spaces of buildings, which might be better thought of here as representing varying degrees of exclusivity. Such an equation does, in fact, work well at both

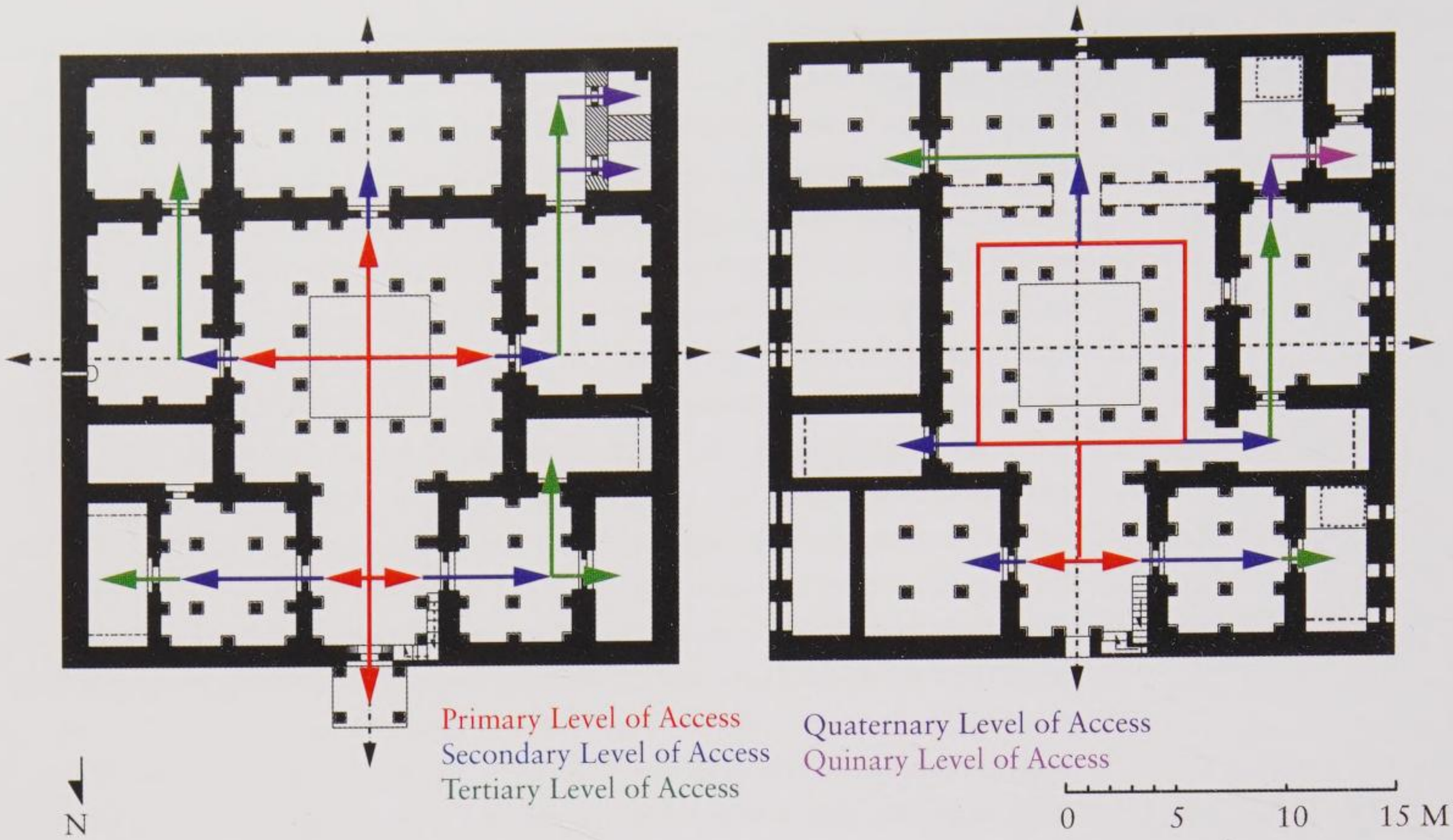


FIG. 3.59.
Plan of the monastery, depicting movement and degrees of access, c. 10th–11th century AD. Kadwāhā.

Kadwāhā and Ranod. Whereas the courtyard at Kadwāhā was among the most accessible spaces within the building, the more sequestered upper stories, with their provisions for bathing, seem intended primarily for the monastery's residents. At Ranod, the degree of accessibility from the exterior needs to be assessed in accordance with the monastery's numerous phases, each of which effectively reframed the relationships between interior and exterior spaces.

An alternative, and perhaps more integral, method of reading movement is less as a passage from the outside inward than as a system of circulation designed from the vantage point of the monastery's residents, whose daily life began and concluded within the building's interior. Degrees of accessibility from this perspective would be measured not in terms of movements from the interior but in terms of the number of access points associated with any given room. By this system of measurement, larger numbers, rather than smaller numbers, indicate a greater degree of accessibility. At Kadwāhā, for example, the front entry hall required only one step from the exterior. At the same time, from the vantage point of the interior, it may be understood as having five points of access, leading north to the outside world, south to the courtyard, east and west to Rooms 1 and 4, respectively, and up to the second floor. In this case, the entry remained a highly accessible space from the vantage point of both the exterior and the interior. However, not every space offers such a direct correlation; a relatively inaccessible room from the vantage point of the exterior might nonetheless be highly accessible from the perspective of the interior. A good case in point is Room 18 at Kadwāhā, the bathing chamber in the southwest corner of the monastery's upper story. Although deeply sequestered within the building's interior, it was easily accessible from the vantage point of the residents in the upper story.

FIG. 3.60.
Plan of the monastery, depicting the distribution of pillar types (red = miśraka; blue = rucaka; yellow = ghaṭapallava), c. 10th–11th century AD. Kadwāhā.

The distinctions created through circulation and paths of movement were often reinforced through ornamental elements, the most visible of which can be located in the use of distinct pillar types. At Kadwāhā, three distinct pillar types were employed within the monastery for deliberate effect (fig. 3.60). The simplest was a plain, unadorned, square (rucaka) pillar standing on an equally plain square base that was used exclusively in five of the monastery's rooms—two on the ground floor (Rooms 7 and 9) and three above (Rooms 17, 21, and 22) (see figs. 3.22, 3.23, 3.36, 3.39). The second was a more ornate rucaka pillar, consisting of an octagonal shaft framed by an abstracted vase-of-plenty motif (ghaṭapallava) on the top and bottom and seated on a simple square base (see figs. 3.21, 3.26, 3.27–3.30, 3.33, 3.34). These were by far the most commonly used within the monastery: they appear in the entrance hall and upper-story front court and in other parts of the monastery that might be understood as among the most easily accessible from the exterior. Finally, the third type was the beautifully rendered mixed (*miśraka*) type—with elaborately molded bases, a shaft that transitions from square to polygonal (here, twelve-sided) to round, and molded echinus (*bharaṇi*)—that was reserved for the pillars around the courtyard (see fig. 3.20).

The variation in pillar types seems not to be simply a matter of convenience or incidental choice; rather, it seems to have been a deliberate decision on the part of the monastery's makers. While at the time, that choice was likely driven by the desire to frame spaces that would have been the most accessible to outsiders entering into the monastery, today it still speaks volumes about the hierarchization of spaces. Points of entry and easily accessible spaces generally employed the ornate variety of square (rucaka) pillar. By contrast, the most sequestered residential areas of the upper story were built exclusively out of the simplest of the

pillar types, revealing a desire to retain an aura of austerity that seems appropriate for the preservation of a monastic way of life. The use of the most ornate pillars—of the mixed (miśraka) type—around the courtyard similarly highlighted its function as the building's circulatory hub. It is important to note that the use of the mixed pillar type (miśraka) on both the lower and upper stories of the courtyard have been determined by their clear visibility even from below (see fig. 3.33).

Although simpler in plan, the monastery at Ranod was no less sophisticated in its approach to ordering internal monastic space. As we have already seen, even the seemingly simple plan of the original building attributed to Puranadara represents a highly formalized approach to architecture that maintained a satisfyingly rigorous order, so praised by Alexander Cunningham many years ago, while also cultivating the impression of an open and airy space.[39] The renovations of the late tenth and eleventh centuries, by contrast, appear at first glance to be far more haphazard, largely because of a seeming irregularity in plan (fig. 3.61). The added enclosure wall (prākāra) does not form an even rectangle, but rather jogs around the south side of the residential complex unevenly. However, even this decision represents part of a highly intentional design that was directed toward incorporating and retaining the order of the original architecture, while simultaneously restructuring movement through the residential space. In addition to reformulating the monastery's interior, the tenth- and eleventh-century renovations at Ranod had the effect of changing the accessibility of Ranod's internal spaces, likely in response to the growth of the site.

The intentional nature of Ranod's renovated architectural program can be seen first and foremost in the careful alignment of the old and the new portions of the building. During the first round of renovations, the added building was carefully positioned so that its southernmost wall was aligned with the southern extent of the veranda of the original building. As a result, it straddled the threshold between the veranda and the space beyond, but it did not infringe upon the southernmost portion of the site occupied by the interior of the original building's main rooms. The dialogue between the two structures was further reinforced visually through the positioning of the window over the room's sink, which was directly on axis with the center of the veranda wall and the location of the niche containing Vyomaśiva's inscription (see figs. 3.44, 3.47). At the same time, the actual entrance into the room was to the north of the veranda of the original building, so that the passage between the two would have occurred comfortably through what would have been an exterior space—beyond the boundaries of the monastic dwelling, certainly at the time prior to the addition of the enclosure wall (prākāra). It may be that the architectural design reflects a conscious decision, intended to create larger spatial distinctions at the level of site.

A similar sensitivity to alignment is visible in the layout of the step-well likely attributable to Vyomaśiva, which was also carefully positioned so that the westernmost extent of the original building was in line with the eastern exterior limits of the veranda. At the same time, the tank was aligned with the newly added "refectory," a decision that seems particularly potent, given that both became stores for water and cleansing in the service of the monastic site. That the other religious

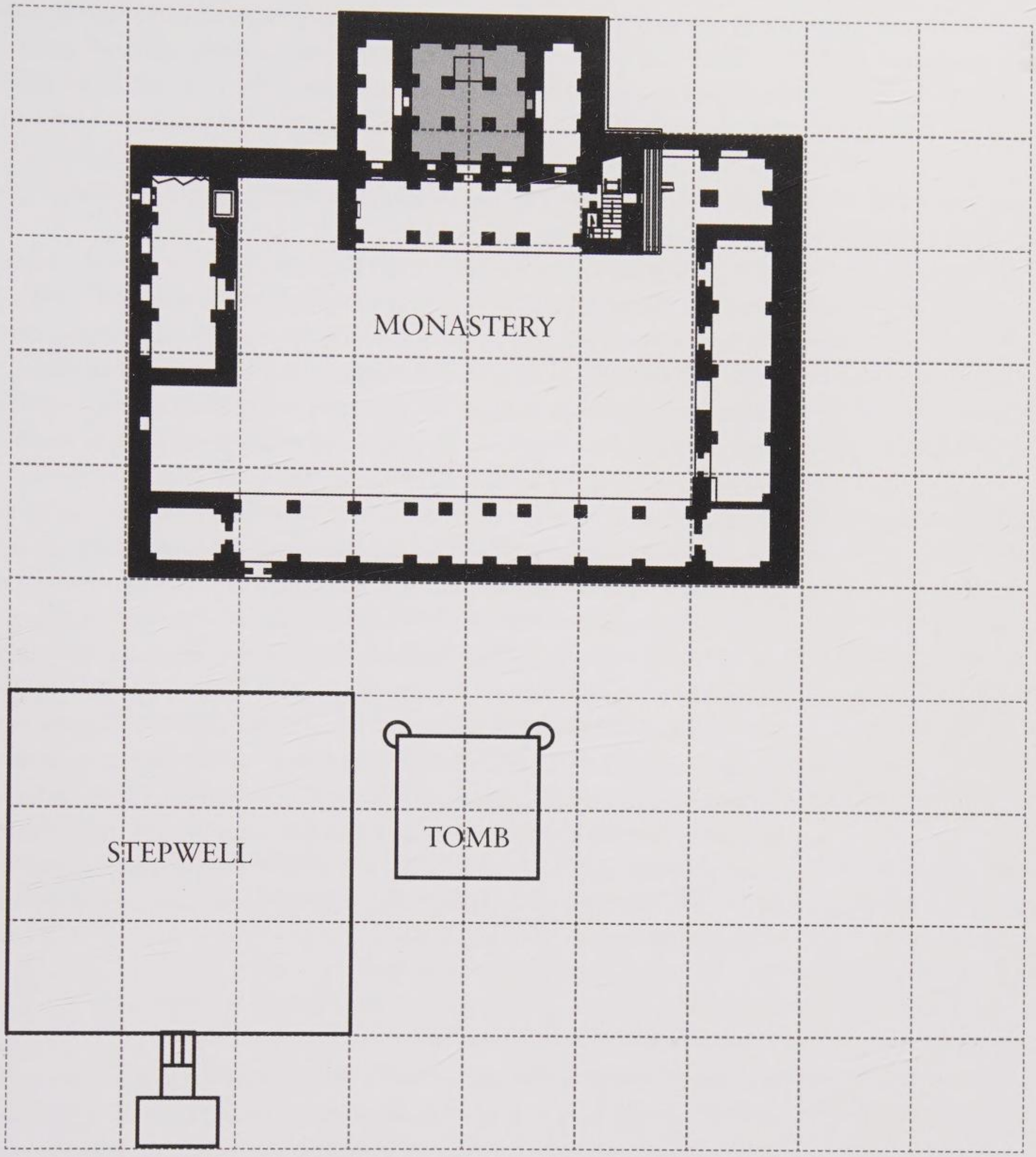


FIG. 3.61.
Plan depicting the spatial organization of the monastic site, c. 9th–11th century AD. Ranod.

structures may have also been carefully situated in relationship to the monastery is indicated through the positioning of the later tomb. As it stands today, the tomb is not only laid out directly along the monastery's north–south axis, but its dimensions are also almost identical to the original monastery's main central room. The scale and positioning here seem far too significant to be coincidental, and the tomb likely indexes the original placement of the portico or sanctum of the temple that was contemporary to the tank.[40]

The careful acts of alignment seen here in the first set of renovations were continued through the addition of the monastery's enclosure wall (prākāra). The decision not to create a flush rectangular enclosure, for example, effectively privileged the shape of the original, ninth-century building and ensured a seamless transition between the old and the new, particularly when approached through the monastery's interior. Similarly, the spacing of pillars along the new north veranda was determined by the spacing of the pillars along the veranda of the original building, so that the dimensions of the individual bays remained synchronized across a north–south grid. In fact, once one begins to recognize the consistency in the design across different phases of building, it becomes easier to see that a systematic formal ordering was maintained throughout the site (see fig. 3.61). In this system, the dimensions of the central room within the monastery appear to be the key to a larger set of measured proportions determining the positioning and layout of architectural elements throughout the site, including the tank (3:1 proportions) and the conjectured temple sanctum or portico (1:1 proportions). Unfortunately, textual sources on Śaiva monasteries are generally mute on the topics of plans and proportions, and thus it is not possible to find direct correspondences with what can be seen at Ranod or Kadwāhā.[41] However, in both cases, the design was so carefully constructed that one should assume a great degree of intention and formalization.

Reading Ritual Through Rooms

The dynamics through which the spatial program of the monasteries at Kadwāhā and Ranod may have facilitated movements and ritual actions—at the levels of both building and site—can help us reimagine the texture of daily life within monasteries, despite the paucity of explicit prescriptions in textual sources. Unlike in the case of town and house planning, standard architectural treatises provide very little information about the structure of Hindu monastic dwellings. Śaiva ritual manuals and inscriptional sources give some sense for the range of ritual actions that resident aspirants likely performed on a daily basis. Yet they tell us very little about the actual composition of a monastic community. Who resided at the monastery? And what was the range of general duties? We know, for example, that monasteries today often house the head guru and his disciples as well as a variety of servants, including one or more priestly officiants, a cook, a gardener, and laborers to maintain the repair of the buildings. Early Śaiva sources indicate that servants, and even slaves, were regularly in the employ of monasteries, and it makes sense that any monastery would have required various categories of

workers in order to maintain the grounds and manage other necessities. Because the ordering of daily life is clearer from the perspective of the ritual practitioner, I will focus primarily on the activities that would have been required of the guru and his disciples, before turning to a consideration of supporting staff and other individuals who might have resided on the premises.[42]

The regimen of daily ritual was directly tied to the ritual of initiation that, as seen earlier, was the most important act within the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition. Initiation effectively destroyed the impurities associated with an individual's past lives, which bound the individual to the cycle of death and rebirth (*saṃsāra*), enabling the possibility for liberation within an initiate's lifetime. However, liberation was not automatic; rather, it required the performance of daily and periodic rituals in order to eradicate the remaining impurities associated with the actual lifetime of the initiate. In order to eradicate these remaining impurities, the initiate was required to practice daily (nityakarman) and occasional (*naimittikakarman*) rituals on auspicious days. More serious, ascetic practitioners were required to perform additional austerities and yogic meditation. Inscriptions associated with the Mattamayūras, more specifically, provide some sense for the range of rites that may have been performed. We find reference to the performance of austerities (tapas) that could produce a fiery internal heat (tejas), to meditation, and to the practice of yoga, which could lead to ultimate liberation. We also find references to sacrificial fires and to rituals of pūjā (image worship), abhiṣekaḥ (consecration or oblations), and the repetition of mantras (japa). And it is made clear that those residing within the monasteries observed vows, were not excessive in their eating habits, and remained celibate.[43]

In order to begin performing any intensive ritual, a worshipper was required to perform rites of self-purification (*ātmaśuddi*). The daily routine, as outlined in Śaiva Siddhānta sources, prescribed two converse processes, the first of which constituted the removal of impurities from the subtle and gross body, and the second of which was aimed at constructing the body anew as a body of divine powers, or a "divine body appropriate to the soul that has become a Śiva."[44] The first part, the removal of impurities, functioned as an emulation of the process of cosmic emission from the body of Śiva, through which the soul was removed from the body to a sacred place above the initiate's head. The second followed the order of cosmic reabsorption, through which the soul descended back into the body, where it came to rest on a lotus throne at the center of the worshipper's heart.[45] These processes of emission and absorption, of purification and reunification in the remaking of the body, have been described by Richard Davis as a "rehearsal of liberation," in the sense that they functioned as repetitions of the original liberating initiation that made it possible for the worshipper to become like Śiva. The process of bodily purification through bathing was thus also a process of spiritual self-transformation that acted on a deeply ontological level aimed at remaking the body as a body of divine powers. This newly transformed body could become a vessel for the presence of Śiva, who ultimately became the principle agent in the performance of daily rites.[46]

On a practical level, the daily self-purification began, quite literally, at the grossest of bodily levels with a ritualized defecation, preferably, according to

textual prescriptions, at a removed place at least 100 feet (30 meters) to the east or north of the residence. The practitioner should ensure that the chosen site was not sacred or holy, and then should utter a prayer to request that the gods and minor deities depart so as not to be offended by the impurity of the act.[47] The next step consisted of a morning toilet, including a meticulous cleaning of the face, teeth, and body through a sequence of baths. The baths in particular constituted a ritual act that went far beyond the base necessities of personal hygiene: they formed a requisite preliminary preparation that had to be done prior to engaging in any kind of formal worship. There were multiple types, usually between six and seven, including baths of water (*vāruṇa-snāna*), of ash from the fire (*ānala-snāna*), of wind (*ānila-snāna*), of earth (*pārthiva-snāna*), of sky (*nābhasa-snāna*), of the guru (*gaurava-snāna*), and of the mind (*mānasa-snāna*).[48] Each of these was to be accompanied by mantras, or sacred sounds, and by meditative visualizations and mindful reenactments of the emergence of the cosmos from the supreme god, Sadāśiva, himself.

Given the emphasis on bathing and ablutions in Śaiva ritual texts, it is not surprising to find multiple chambers that seem designed specifically for the purpose of accommodating daily bathing or worship that consisted of pouring liquid offerings. In both monasteries, at Kadwāhā and Ranod, we find at least two chambers on the monastery's upper story that were specially fitted with shallow rectangular basins and drains, and that may have been specially designated for daily ritual bathing. At Ranod, the two rooms were identical in form and symmetrically arranged on either side of the upper story of the original monastery (see figs. 3.6, 3.14). At Kadwāhā, the two rooms were located in two different places; whereas the first was attached to a small chamber in the northeast corner of the building (Room 14), the second was the first of an interlocking group of three rooms in the southeast corner (Room 18) (see figs. 3.19, 3.31, 3.32, 3.37, 3.59).

Despite this difference, a number of features seem to tie these rooms together and suggest that they followed a unified decorum for building. The first is expressed through the layout and orientation of their internal space. In all four cases, the rooms were designed so that the shallow square basin used to catch the poured fluids occupied the south side of the chamber.[49] Their main entrances were directly to the north of the basin, and the rooms themselves were provided with ample daylight and ventilation, a distinguishing feature within buildings that were otherwise quite dark. And finally, in at least three cases, the bathing chamber was fitted either with niches or with a shelf that was inset into the wall, presumably for the storage of substances and items required for the bath. The resulting orientation of these chambers is in keeping with bodily actions described in Śaiva texts, which required the worshipper to sit to the south of the god Śiva and face toward the north while performing the ritual.[50]

In addition to offering a glimpse into the most integral of daily activities, these bathing chambers also provide contextual evidence for understanding relationships between adjoining rooms. Here it is notable that they are all found among the rooms of their respective monastery's upper stories. In describing the various spaces within each monastery earlier in this chapter, I suggested that the

ground story was likely a more public place within the monastery, reserved for formalized group activities and possibly for official rituals or business that involved the monastery's various lay participants, including, in the case of Kadwāhā, royal patrons. The upper story, by contrast, seems to have been a more exclusive space, reserved primarily as living chambers for members of the resident monastic community. If this was indeed the case, then the spatial relationship between the bathing chambers and their adjoining rooms may have been fairly significant. In the case of Ranod, the two bathing chambers flanked a larger central room that may have served, in the monastery's original incarnation, as the main dormitory for the resident sages; after renovations, it is possible that it functioned as a particularly privileged zone for the head guru or other senior practitioners.

At Kadwāhā, the positioning of the rooms adjacent to the two bathing chambers seems to more specifically suggest a hierarchy of status. The first bathing chamber, Room 14 on the plan, was attached to a single large room (Room 13) that occupied a prominent position within the upper story. By contrast, the second, Room 18 on the plan, was shared by two larger halls (Rooms 17 and 21). While the associations of "shared" and "attached" bathrooms as public and private today is a relatively modern concept, it may here also indicate something about the rank of the two rooms. For example, the room with the "attached" bath may have potentially served as a privileged residence, perhaps of the head guru; it was positioned auspiciously at the north side of the building, where it would have received ample light from the front inner court, which would have afforded easy access to the balcony overlooking the temple just outside. Although it was technically closer to the entrance, and thus less sequestered within the building as a whole, it was enterable only from one direction, through a single entrance to the east (see figs. 3.1, 3.16). The two halls attached to the second bathing chamber, by contrast, were much larger and more easily accessible from the interior of the upper story. Both possessed at least two or three distinct entrances, and both likely could have been entered directly from the courtyard.

These two large halls (Rooms 17 and 21) present a compelling problem. Both large, but differently sized, they remained distinct, even as they may have functioned in either analogous or complementary ways. One possibility is that both might have been intended as dormitories, but for practitioners of different initiatory status. However, if we return to the daily routine as described in textual sources, other possibilities come to light. The first is that one of the rooms may have been reserved as a space for the principle daily rite, an individualized practice through which the disciple performed his own personal worship of Siva, and which generally followed the daily bath. The principle daily rite could take place in a temple, but within the context of a monastery, we should assume that the individual daily worship was distinct from the more public performances that took place, also daily, in the nearby temple. Details of the principle daily rite vary from source to source but have been generally described by Alexis Sanderson as follows: "The deities were visualized and then worshipped, first mentally, in the heart, and then externally, on the earthen platform or in the idol. After this service (*pūjā*) the mantras of the cult's pantheon were silently repeated a fixed number of

times with the aid of a rosary (*akṣamālā*), and then gratified with a proportionate number of oblations into a consecrated fire."[51] Thus the rite itself could engage multiple practices, including meditation, visualization, and the recitation of sacred sounds (mantras), as well as the worship of Śiva installed, or made present, either in an earthen mound or in a movable icon. While many Non-Dualist Śaiva sects seem to have preferred worshipping Śiva through sacred diagrams (maṇḍala) and visualization, Śaiva Siddhānta seems to have emphasized the worship of Śiva installed in a liṅga, usually indicating a small, movable icon temporarily installed for the duration of the ritual.[52] Śaiva Siddhānta texts lay out extensive prescriptions for the creation of icons of divinity out of various materials, including jewels, metals, wood, earth, and even glass.[53]

Another possibility is that the larger of the two rooms, Room 21, may have functioned as a classroom or chamber for instruction by the head guru, who, in Mattamayūra inscriptions, was frequently extolled for his ability to teach students and pass on ritual knowledge.[54] According to Śaiva texts, lessons with the guru were standard practice, ideally to be conducted after the performance of the obligatory daily rites. For example, the *Mṛgendrāgama*—composed at some point before the tenth century, probably in the northern region of Kaśmīr—describes part of a regular daily regimen as bowing down to the guru and listening to his recitations of and commentaries on religious texts: "Members of the Śaiva community should get up at dawn. When they have completed their daily rites, they should bow to their preceptor and carry out the duties that the guru orders. Those who live with the guru and depend on him should go over their lessons and listen to the Śaiva texts that he teaches, abandoning all feelings of pride, jealousy, hypocrisy and passion."[55] Since the daily lesson remained a highly ritualized and privileged event, instruction was required to take place in a suitable and secure chamber, to prevent the accidental overhearing of the teachings by those who had not been initiated at the right level; the consequences for such a transgression could be quite severe.

The recitation and commentary on sacred texts formed the heart of the lesson, which, in addition to functioning as a way of disseminating ritual knowledge, also served to situate both the guru and the scripture within a long, streaming tradition. According to the text, after performing his own morning purificatory rituals, the guru should take his position on a special raised seat (pīṭha) or throne in a clean place large enough to be accompanied by his pupils. Before beginning the actual recitation, two acts needed to be undertaken. When he was ready, the guru opened the session by first performing ritual worship of Śiva, Gaṇeśa, and then his own guru, effectively situating himself within a lineage that stemmed from the god himself. Then he turned to the larger canon of Śaiva scriptures, in order to situate the text of the day within the broader tradition. It was only then that the guru could turn to specific passages for analysis and exposition. Because key texts were understood as stemming from various aspects of Śiva, the recitation of both the preliminary canons and the text itself can also be seen as a reinforcement, through reiteration, of the divine origins of the tradition.[56]

The nature of the daily lesson as a key event for the monastic community would have necessitated a relatively large chamber, with adequate space for the

guru's special seat and an assembly of resident disciples. Ideally, the chamber should be easily securable, both to maintain the exclusivity of the teachings and to prevent any interruption, as texts make it clear that any interruptions to the lesson would be seriously inauspicious. Similarly, one might expect a space in which hierarchies within the monastic community might be sustained, as suggested not only through textual sources but also through reliefs depicting the guru in the act of teaching (see fig. 0.8). Such chambers find mention occasionally in architectural treatises, where they are described as a special hall for discourse and learning, known as the vidyābhyāsa-gṛha or vidyā-vyākhyā-maṇḍapa.[57]

At Ranod, the most likely space appears to be the central chamber on the ground story of the original monastic dwelling, where the platform that today houses the goddess Bījasen Devī may have marked the original seat of the guru (see figs. 3.9, 3.10). Although it is unclear whether this platform dates to the same period as the building, it fits well within the space and is on axis with the front entrance. If it was original, it may have functioned as the seat of the head guru not only during daily recitations but also during other rituals, such as during initiations. It is possible that this kind of room may have served as a worship hall during more formal occasions, such as the *guru-purnima* ceremonies celebrated today, during which audiences of dozens or more come to perform pūjā, or worship, of the living guru. It seems particularly suggestive that the two side rooms are used today to store ritual implements, and it is tempting to think of them as particularly well-protected chambers for the preservation also of the monastic library.

More formal functions within the monastery may have included special initiations and consecrations (*abhiṣekam*) of gurus and ācāryas (priests) and disciples moving up in the monastic ranks, as well as occasional rites that were celebrated periodically at designated intervals. While these often consisted of special acts of worship in the main temple during specific months or for particularly important festivals, they also included the installation of movable icons that may have been installed within the monastery, including liṅgas, the *vidyāpīṭha* ("seat of knowledge") that served as the site of the renewal and installation of sacred texts, and images of prominent sages. An inscription from the Kalachuri site of Bilhāri provides evidence for the degree to which a major Mattamayūra monastery functioned as a center for large-scale ritual, dictating that inhabitants of a number of towns and villages, including the capital city of Tripurī, bring required materials—in this case "a bull made of beautiful wood"—during a special festival in honor of Śiva.[58]

Even more importantly, a monastery like Kadwāhā, which was frequented by local chiefs and kings, may have been the locus for special rituals relating to royal affairs, including the initiation and consecration of the king, as indicated through the fragmentary inscription describing the resident sage's initiation of King Harirāja of Buḍhi Chanderī. The initiation of a king was a ritual that would have been performed with a fair amount of pomp and display. In addition, periodic reconsecrations would have been conducted to reaffirm the king's status among the larger community of Śaivas. During the course of the ceremonies, the guru would also anoint emblems of the king's military prowess, including horses, elephants, soldiers, and weapons,

in order to invest them with both symbolic and ritual power.[59] Here, the clear grandiosity in scale of some of the rooms within Kadwāhā's monastery seems particularly well suited to facilitate such elaborate events.

On the opposite side of the ritual spectrum were practices internal to the monastic community, such as meditation and yoga. Inscriptions associated with the Mattamayūras make it clear that prominent gurus prided themselves on their status as ascetics who had achieved proficiency in yoga and achieved liberation through success in meditation. The Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, for example, describes a resident sage as being "one who has checked the wind," or, in other words, one who is proficient in *prāṇāyāma* meditation.[60] At Gurgī, the guru Praśāntaśiva was one "who had mastered (*all*) the *āsanas* (yogic postures)" and who "felt the inner joy with his steady mind absorbed in the meditation of Siva seated in the midst of the lotus of the heart."[61] Religious texts provide additional prescriptions that suggest that the monastery could have served as a place that was conducive to the successful performance of meditation and yoga. An early Śaiva Siddhānta text, the *Parākhyatantra,* prescribes that in order to be fruitful, yoga should occur "in a lonely place [or Śiva temple], or a grove, or in an agreeable mountain cave, or in an earthen hut that is thoroughly secluded (*suvibhakte*), free from insects, draught, and damp."[62] Ideal venues noted in other sources suggest that the room or building should be in a remote and secure environment on a mountain, or in a cave, or in an earthen hut that has not been damaged or made impure by the actions of malevolent sorcerers. A passage from the *Sarvajñānottara* is particularly suggestive. It notes: "The student, pure, after performing his bath and ablutions, should bow his head to Śiva, salute [his lineage of] preceptors of yoga, and [then] engage in yoga in an empty building, or in a delightful monastery, or in an auspicious temple. Or [he may practice] on the bank of a river, in a desolate spot, an earthen hut or in a forest; [provided it is] sheltered, windless, noise-free and unpopulated, free from obstacles to yoga, free from doubt [about its ownership] (*nirvikalpa*) and not too hot."[63] The power of such practice, defined early on in the *Parākhyatantra,* again resided in the body of the practitioner. The text prescribes that the yogin's "posture should be comfortable in the lotus pose, or the *svastika, daṇḍa,* or half-moon. In the lotus pose he should have his feet resting on either thigh (*parasparorusaṃśliṣṭau*), [with the soles] facing upwards."[64] In addition to endowing the practitioner with the freedom of all-pervasive movement, such practices could also endow him with wondrous magical powers, or siddhis, turning the sage into a veritable sorcerer.[65]

Although the descriptions of actual places considered to be ideal for yogic practice are incredibly varied, they converge on a number of details. In all cases, the best spaces for performing yoga should be either enclosed or secluded in some way, be comfortable in terms of temperature and environmental conditions, and offer some sort of shelter for the practitioner. While a mountain cave might be preferred by a wandering ascetic, in the context of sites such as Kadwāhā and Ranod, the monastery may have served just as well by offering an interiorized environment that could facilitate the successful practice of yoga. At Kadwāhā, it is possible that some of the more sequestered rooms, such as the pair of solitary chambers in

the southwest corner of the ground story (Rooms 12a and 12b), may have been reserved for particularly intensive yoga or meditation. At Ranod, it is possible that the forested grove just outside the monastery provided an equally fitting location for serious practice, especially during more temperate months. In this sense, it was the interior rooms within the monastery at Kadwāhā and the exterior spaces around the hermitage at Ranod that may have served similar purposes.

In addition to rooms for sleeping, teaching, and various ritual practices, monasteries must have been fitted with chambers that were primarily utilitarian in function. One particularly useful textual passage for imagining the range of requisite spaces comes from a description of the construction not of a Śaiva but of a Vaiṣṇava hermitage in the *Garuda Purāṇa*. After describing the preliminary rites of consecration, the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* gives prescriptions for a hermitage (āśrama) built in the vicinity of a Viṣṇu temple. According to the text, the āśrama should consist of the following components: (1) a great seat; (2) a sacrificial altar or maṇḍapa (*sattramaṇḍapa*); (3) a kitchen (*mahānasa*); (4) a sweet-smelling "house of floral scents" (*gandhapuṣpagṛha*); (5) a storeroom; (6) a cowshed (*goṣṭhāgāra*); (7) a room for keeping water; (8) a room for keeping wood, grass, and fuel for the fire sacrifice; (9) a room for weapons; (10) a guesthouse containing beds; (11) accommodations for servants; and (12) numerous additional storage spaces for keeping shoes, water, fire, and lamps. In addition, an image of the "teacher of the gods" (*surejya,* also the name of Bṛhaspati) should be placed in front of the building, and wells, trees, and flower gardens should be established nearby. Finally, the entire complex, including the residence, temple, and other peripheral structures, should be enclosed by a wall measuring five cubits.[66] Among the architectural treatises, the *Aparājitapṛcchā* of western India contains one of the more elaborate descriptions of the main components of a monastery (maṭha). According to the text, the monastery should contain halls (maṇḍapas), including a sacrificial altar (sattramaṇḍapa), assembly hall (*agraśālā*), and a hall for instruction and teaching (vidyā-vyākhyāna-maṇḍapa). It should be surrounded by an enclosure wall (prākāra) and approached through an elaborate gateway (*pratolī*).[67] In addition to the rooms prescribed in texts, monasteries also likely contained a library for holding sacred texts.

Of the various spaces prescribed in these texts, we have already encountered the possibility of a great seat, assembly hall, and hall for instruction or teaching. A sacrificial altar or maṇḍapa also likely existed, as Mattamayūra inscriptions reveal an investment in performing fire sacrifice, but possibly outside the monastery in the vicinity of the temple. Storage rooms were probably located in various places within the two monasteries. At Kadwāhā, the most obvious places are in the upper story (Rooms 15–16) and among the rooms within the northeast and northwest quadrants of the ground story (Rooms 1–3 and 4–6). At Ranod, the most obvious spaces were situated similarly at the northeast and northwest corners of the front veranda, and possibly the two lateral rooms within the original monastic dwelling. Such spaces may have been used to store a wide range of ritual implements, described in Śaiva Siddhānta sources. For the fire sacrifice alone, these would have included ladles, sticks for kindling sacred fire, and vessels to facilitate

measurements and quantities of substances for oblations. Offerings that may have been stored included rice, clarified butter (*ghee*), grains, sesamum seeds, honey, candied sugar, vegetable roots, and fruits. These were ideally stored in gold, silver, or copper vessels. In addition, vessels were needed to wash and dry the offerings before use, and additional substances were needed to purify the vessels: tamarind was prescribed for purifying copper vessels, cow dung for silver, and simply water for gold. Other ceremonies, such as the great consecration (mahābhiṣeka) for an ācārya or priest, required sixteen varieties of conches, potfuls of sacred water, jewels, incense, flowers, medicinal herbs, and clothes. Finally, at the most basic level of daily rites, one would need pots for water and offerings, incense, flower garlands, ghee, and lamps for performing *āratī,* or the offering of a sacred flame.[68]

The prevalence of dairy products, and notably ghee, brings us back to the mention of a cowshed as a key component of a monastic site. At a larger monastic site, such as Kadwāhā, the cowshed itself may have existed beyond the walls of the main residence, and possibly in the vicinity of the temple. In such cases, temple complexes may have been surrounded by walls, and so the monastery itself would represent only one complex within a larger walled compound. However, at smaller sites or in the case of a hermitage, it is quite possible that cows could be kept within an open courtyard overnight and then led out to graze during the daylight hours.[69] At Ranod, portions of the expansive courtyard itself may have been used for keeping one or more cows or goats. Just beyond the front entrance, in the monastery's main wall (prākāra), along the eastern enclosing wall between the veranda and the freestanding room, was a well-defined space for oblation or food preparation that may have served this purpose well.

The sheer number of foods also evokes the notion of a kitchen, which was the third requisite room listed in the description in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*. This is particularly telling in the cases of Kadwāhā and Ranod, as we have already seen that each monastery possesses a tall, well-ventilated chamber that may have been designed for this purpose.[70] It is possible that the monasteries at both sites may have begun to provide services for travelers as well as ritualized charitable meals for both honored guests and nearby divinities. It is also possible that they may have begun to provide a range of social support services. Inscriptional sources from other sites describe the function of monasteries as charitable food-distribution centers, schools, hospices, and even hospitals. It is also worth noting that food preparation was not merely about the provisions for those who resided within the monastery, but it was also required for the daily maintenance of the divine icons residing in the nearby temples. Thus the kitchen was never merely utilitarian in function; it was a highly sanctified space that needed to be maintained at the highest level of purity, as were the implements that were likely stored directly within or in adjacent chambers (such as, possibly, Room 3 at Kadwāhā).[71]

In addition to the ritual implements and tools for cooking within the monastery, we should also envision the interior spaces as possessing a variety of furnishings. The clearest example would have been the head guru's main seat (piṭha), a special plinth or installation for manuscripts or sacred texts, and possibly a variety of grass mats that may have been laid along the floors, at the very least,

within bedchambers. Beds themselves were likely unused, as indicated in the inscription from Ranod, which includes a warning that "those rogues who sleep on beds in the monastery" would risk the incurrence of "the bad karma of all five fatal sins."[72] Another room that may have been furnished in a particular way was the bathing chamber, as texts tell us that, if a practitioner could not take his daily bath in a holy river or other sacred natural water source, it was acceptable for him to take the bath at home while seated on a stool (pīṭha). On a more ephemeral level, the holes in the floor that I noted above, within the context of Kadwāhā's more elaborately ceremonial spaces, suggests the presence of temporary furnishings that may have been used for special occasions.[73]

Finally, it is worth considering how the monastery might have accommodated individuals who were not actively engaged in the daily performance of rituals, such as servants and laborers as well as, potentially, pilgrims and travelers. While it possible that accommodations for other individuals active in the life of the monastery may have existed beyond the main complex's walls, there are several spaces that might suggest such a function. For example, at Kadwāhā, we find close to the front of the monastery, at the northeast and northwest corners, a series of rooms that may have functioned as quarters for servants responsible for the maintenance of the monastery and its associated buildings. Located near the entrance—in a portion of the monastery that was both easily accessible from the interior and exterior and separate from the main residential areas above—these rooms may have been ideal accommodations for servants employed in activities such as cooking, gathering water, wood, and other materials, and generally maintaining the monastery and its surrounding environments. Similarly, at Ranod, one of the two rooms located at the corners of the north veranda may have served as a functional equivalent, as chambers for individuals and/or supplies required for the daily maintenance of the monastic community. As at Kadwāhā, these rooms were positioned outside the zone of regular residence in a way that allowed easy movement in and out of the building.

If the monastery provided accommodations for travelers, it is similarly likely that these people would have been accommodated on the monastery's ground story. At both Kadwāhā and Ranod, the most likely areas would have been along the west side of the monastery, in large rooms that may have functioned well as dormitories. As in the case of the servants' quarters, these were chambers that were fairly accessible from the exterior of the monastery and were within range of the zones of more active and possibly "public" ritual; at the same time, they remained relatively removed from the upper story, which likely functioned as the living quarters for the resident guru and his disciples.

While it is ultimately impossible to fully determine how every space within the monastery functioned on a daily basis, it is possible to begin reimagining the shape of monastic life through patterns in the layout of internal rooms. Kadwāhā and Ranod make a particularly good pair in this endeavor, not only because they articulate two different types of buildings, but also because of the overlap in their underlying conceptions. At play in both monasteries is an intricate dialogue

between interiority and exteriority, both of which were fundamental sources of ascetic power. At Kadwāhā, the monastery's virtually windowless and unrelentingly planar surfaces created a visual barrier that rendered activities in the interior invisible from outside. At Ranod, by contrast, the illusion of permeability seems to be integral to the design of both the original monastic retreat as well as its later expansions. This was a permeability that was ultimately belied by the careful hierarchization of spaces within the monastery itself, and by the impenetrability of the walls beyond the airy facade.

It is through this dialogue, between the interiority of the monastery and the urbanizing world beyond, that the monasteries also articulated their status as forested retreats or institutional centers. Whereas the monastery at Kadwāhā expressed a grandeur that may have been in keeping with the institutionalization of a monastic tradition, the monastery at Ranod remained a hermitage, situated on the outskirts of a growing medieval town. Its inscription thereby emphasized the spiritual merits of the lineage of head gurus and of the identity of its residents as inveterate ascetics who were celibate and remained true to their vows. At Kadwāhā, by contrast, the fragmentary inscription listed at least three incidents involving rulers who had come to the monastery, either for initiation or to settle some dispute. Thus it is not surprising to find large ceremonial spaces within the monastery at Kadwāhā for which there are no clear equivalents at Ranod. At the same time, it is equally telling that we find a number of analogies between the two buildings, including the overall northern orientation, the general layout of bathing chambers, and the long rectangular halls that appear to have functioned as dormitories.

Still, we must remember that the monasteries themselves were anything but static; while Ranod may have started out as a hermitage, the renovations undertaken in the tenth and eleventh centuries transformed what had once been a fairly modest āśrama for ascetics into a more prominent dwelling. Located less than 9.5 miles (15 kilometers) from Kadwāhā, Ranod remained closely connected to the growing monastic network, even as it continued to function as a more remote place. It is, in fact, likely that the two may have been frequented by many of the same sages moving from one to the other during their lifetimes. Many key rituals, such as the mahābhiṣeka, or consecration of a priest, required that the practitioner first set off to reside for a period as a hermit near the banks of a holy river, preferably in the forest, before beginning his preliminary vows. As a result, a place like Ranod may have formed a requisite counterpart to a larger institution, as embodied by Kadwāhā. The boundaries between the two were likely not fixed, but rather quite fluid, encouraging movement from one to another, depending on the stage in a practitioner's life. Indeed, a monastery like Ranod may have functioned as a training ground for more advanced adepts found at monasteries such as Kadwāhā.

As a whole, the functional distinctions between monasteries, which found expression through their forms, may have been ultimately rooted in their status as places, in the center and outskirts of larger towns. In both cases, the monastery itself expressed its status as a space for ascetic practice in a way that was appropriate to its larger context. Whereas the monastery at Kadwāhā became

an articulation of the abode of a powerful, royally patronized guru at the head of an expanding religious network, the hermitage at Ranod remained a place for the performance of austerities outside the domain of human settlement. At the same time, neither monastery can be understood, at its heart, as wholly ascetic. Rather, each in its own way represents a meditation on renunciation by an institutionalizing lineage of spiritual teachers whose power was derived from the practices of austerities, but whose authority was ultimately rooted in their ability to attract royal patronage and to engage a broader world.

CHAPTER 4

Expanding Arenas of Devotion

Temple Icons and Living Sages at Terāhī and Surwāyā

> He had a student named Prabodhaśiva, known as the "one whose wishes are fulfilled," thanks to the power of his austerities (*tapas*) . . . who was an ascetic whose (own) obligations were fulfilled and whose *karma* was extinguished, [but] who [still] performed *pūja* (temple worship), *abhiṣeka* (ablutions), *japa* (ritual recitation), restraint, and fire sacrifice, not for his own prosperity in a future life, but for the good of the world.

In 1915, Madhav Rao Scindia, the mahārāja of Gwalior, requested that plans be made for the conservation of the archaeological remains within an old fortress, known at the time as Bale Qila, at the site of Surwāyā, just 10 miles (16 kilometers) from his summer home in Shivpuri (fig. 4.1). In accordance with his wishes to "make it a site attractive to visitors," D. R. Bhandarkar, who was then the head of the Western Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India, made a trip in August of that year to inspect the temples, monastery, and mosque that still remained in situ. His findings, which are recorded in his 1915–16 report, were highly favorable. He wrote that "the temples were highly interesting even though they had lost their spires," and the monastery in particular, because of its rarity, contributed significantly to "the antiquarian interest and value of the site." Bhandarkar concluded that it would be just a short while before "visitors will flock to this site and enjoy themselves most profitably," provided that adequate repairs were undertaken.[1] The repairs were swiftly completed under the supervision of M. B. Garde, inspector of archaeology of Gwalior State, who ensured that the site was "cleared of jungle" and the buildings were "put into sound structural repair."[2] By 1917, serious conservation had commenced, and Garde had set about the task of writing an archaeological guidebook to the site that was published by the Gwalior Darbar in 1919.[3]

The excitement about Surwāyā was no doubt fueled by a number of factors. One may have been the discovery that same year of two more monasteries just a bit further south, at Kadwāhā and Terāhī (see figs. 3.1, 4.2). Other factors likely included Surwāyā's convenient location and its proximity to a forest known for big-game hunting. The combination of geographical location and archaeological interest was highly effective in drawing both European and Indian travelers, who often included Surwāyā in their journeys while stopping in Shivpuri, Gwalior, Jhansi, and Indore. In addition to tourists and casual observers, Surwāyā attracted a fair amount of interest among scholars in the 1920s and 1930s. Photographic prints of the site were requested and sent to individuals and institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom, and many esteemed academicians made a point of visiting, not the least of whom included Ananda Coomaraswamy, Norman Brown, and Stella Kramrisch. It was for this reason, perhaps, that a reprint of Garde's *Guide to Surwaya* was reissued at least twice, in 1933 and 1939.[4]

While the stimulus for initial archaeological work may have been the monastery, the real draw for visitors was likely the nearby temples, which were praised in archaeological reports as "fine examples of late mediaeval architecture with deep bold carvings which reached their highest perfection in the porch of the larger temple."[5] The emphasis on Surwāyā's temples is not surprising, given

FIG. 4.1.
Overview of the monastic site, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.2.
Overview of the monastic site, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, Terāhī.

their sheer visual dominance at the monastic site still today. Although smaller than the monastery, they occupy a wider arena and exert a greater visual appeal through their elaborately sculpted surfaces. For scholars, the ornamentation was of particular importance, not only as a testament to the skill of the artists, but also to help answer questions of chronology and religious affiliation. The temples were clearly intended to house icons of the god Śiva, and the sculpture falls easily within the spectrum of the tenth or early eleventh centuries. Just as in the present, at the time of their initial making, the spectacle of the temples' walls would have attracted growing lay audiences, intent on exchanging glances (darśana) with the main enshrined deities. The monastery, by contrast, remained the domain of ascetics, and the comparative austerity of its surfaces would have communicated the exclusivity and interiority of its resident ritual community.

Taking Surwāyā and Terāhī as its point of departure, this chapter examines how monasteries became transformed through the addition of accompanying temples, which served an important function in bridging the gap between lay and monastic worlds. The complex architectural histories of these two sites make them particularly fitting case studies. In both cases, the monasteries significantly predate the establishment of their accompanying temples by as much as two centuries, even though they appear coherent from their exteriors today. Embedded within their walls are fragments of older structures, which index the origin of both sites as smaller hermitages dating back to the eighth and ninth centuries. Other details, traceable through the two monasteries' walls and plans, additionally reveal moments of radical expansion that were not incoincidentally concurrent with the establishment of new temples. As the ritual arena grew beyond the monasteries' walls, the world within the monastery was fundamentally reconfigured, as the buildings grew to resemble more familiar institutional centers, analogous to the model seen at Kadwāhā rather than that at Ranod. Most significantly, a parallel was established between monastery and temple, or between the residence of the living guru and the sanctified home of the god Śiva, embodied and made manifest within a stone icon.

Unfortunately, the factors that make Surwāyā and Terāhī particularly rich also make them especially challenging. Because both monasteries were significantly altered over the course of many moments, establishing their original forms requires a process of careful analysis and interpretation. Similarly, because neither site retains any trace of its original inscriptions, the evidence of built form remains crucial for deciphering historical context. The first half of this chapter is therefore dedicated to laying out the forms and chronologies of building, which form the basis for subsequent reimaginings of the relationship between temples and monasteries, and of the expansion of ritual life at the two sites.

Deconstructing Surwāyā

From the perspective of the present day, Surwāyā is by far the most accessible of any surviving Śaiva monastic site. Situated in a stalwart fortress (*gaḍhi*) just off the main road running from Shivpuri to Jhansi, the main monuments can easily

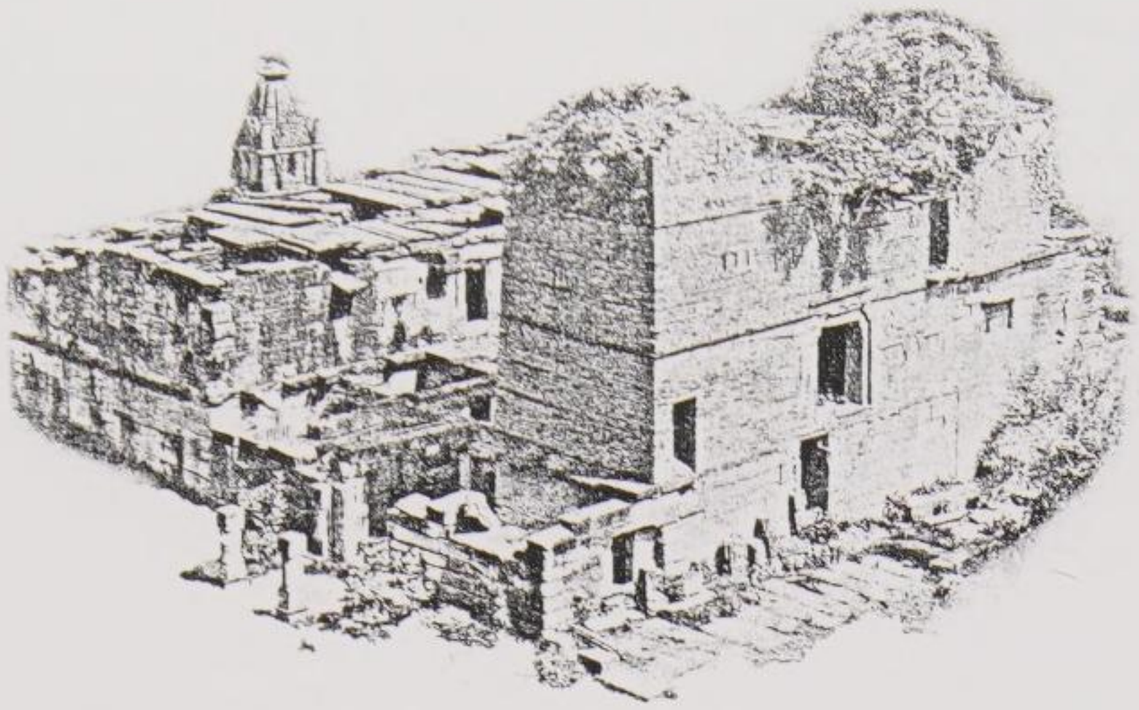


FIG. 4.3.
Surwāyā before conservation, c. 1915 AD (after a photograph published in *ASIAR* [1915–16]: pl. 3).

be visited in half a day. This accessibility likely played a key role in bringing it so sharply to the attention of both the mahārāja of Gwalior and the archaeological establishment in 1914–15. As a result, at first glance, Surwāyā appears to be in an excellent state of repair. However, this achievement came with much effort and at great cost. Not only was the fortress overrun by jungle and its monuments in "a very dilapidated condition," but the original site had been noticeably transformed through its reuse over time.[6]

The first acts of conservation undertaken by colonial-era archaeologists were aimed at putting the surviving monuments into sound structural repair and restoring the site to its earliest moment, through the removal of elements perceived as later additions. Among the first to go, in the 1920s, were the two additional stories built above the monastery's west wing, which were regarded as an "eyesore" and an "ugly accretion" that "blocked the view of the original monument" (fig. 4.3).[7] The next decade saw the resetting of the original pavement, the restoration of the fortress walls, the reconstruction of the monastery's roof, and the insertion of iron rails and brackets to secure cracked door lintels and beams. By the middle of the 1940s, archaeologists quietly removed the remains of a small mosque that had been superimposed against the facade of the smallest temple at the site. The mosque, which had been noted in Bhandarkar's initial report as being "of no particular architectural merit," was slowly erased through its omission from subsequent reports, and by the time it was finally fully dismantled, it was described simply as "a later uninteresting structure near temple 3" that had not only become dilapidated during the rainy season, but also "blocked the view of the temple" (fig. 4.4).[8]

Although these archaeological interventions were effective in making Surwāyā more attractive for visitors, they also inadvertently obscured the layers of the site's complex history. Garde and his contemporaries assumed that the monastery at Surwāyā had been established entirely through the patronage of the Kacchapaghāta kings of Narwar and Gwalior. As a result, in removing sultanate-era accretions, they privileged a tenth-century moment and inadvertently removed portions of the building's original structure. The most poignant trace of loss that I encountered when I first visited the site in 1999 was through a remnant of a stairway leading nowhere in the monastery's northern hall (see figs. 4.5, 4.15). Because its passage had been obstructed by the roof slabs that were reinstalled after the removal of the upper stories in 1927–28, the upper story could only be accessed using a metal ladder kept conveniently on-site. More recent work conducted by the North Indian Temple Survey Project of the Archaeological Survey of India has corrected the situation and reestablished proper passage from the lower to the upper story (see fig. 4.17).

While it is easy to criticize the actions of colonial-era archaeologists, in the case of Surwāyā, they faced additional difficulties presented by a site whose history remains deceptively elusive. Unlike at Ranod or Kadwāhā, Surwāyā's

FIG. 4.4.
Plan of the monuments in Surwāyā fort, as seen in 1919, including: temples (1–3); a mosque (4); a step-well (5); and the remains of attendant shrines (6) (base plan after Garde's *Guide to Surwaya*).

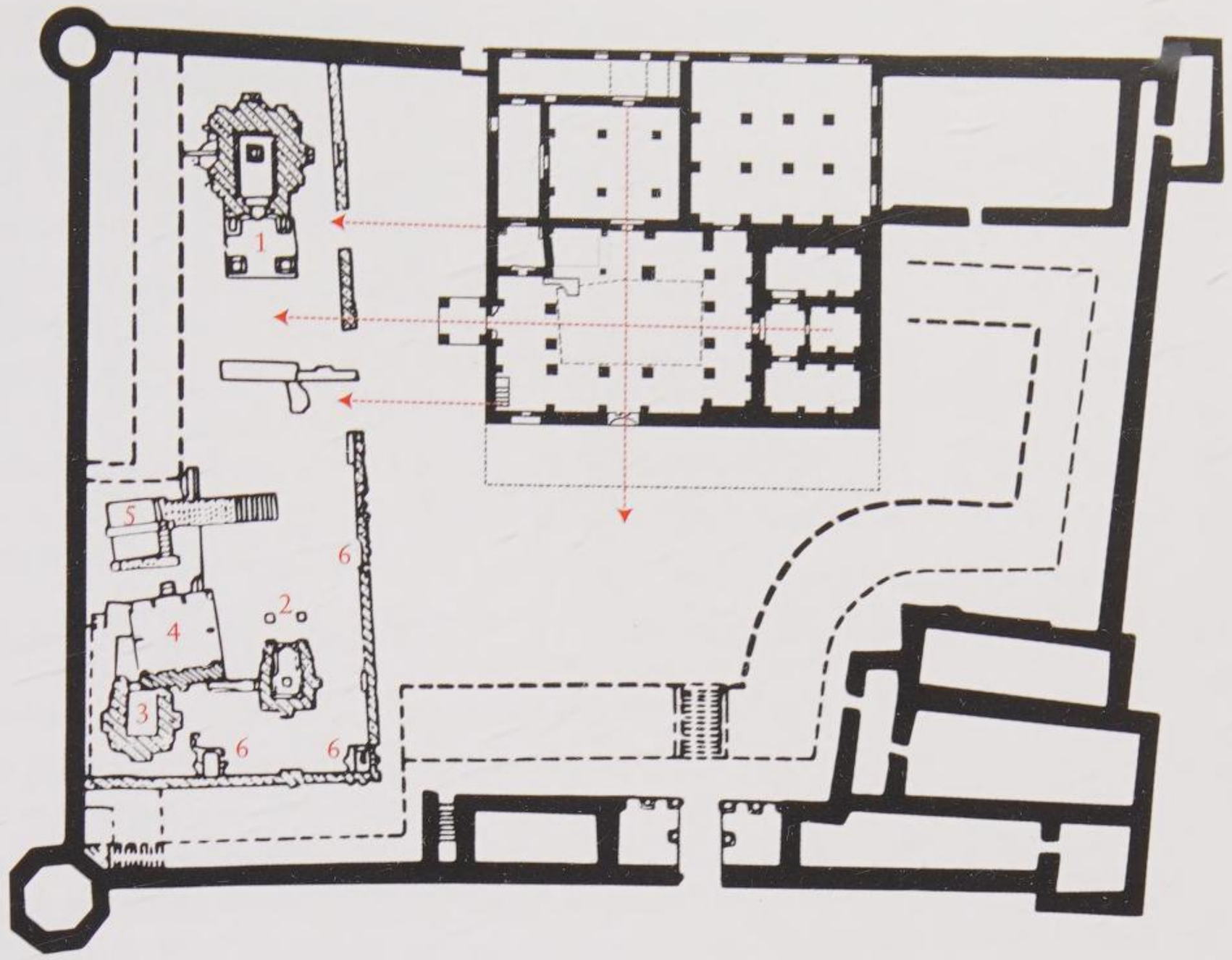
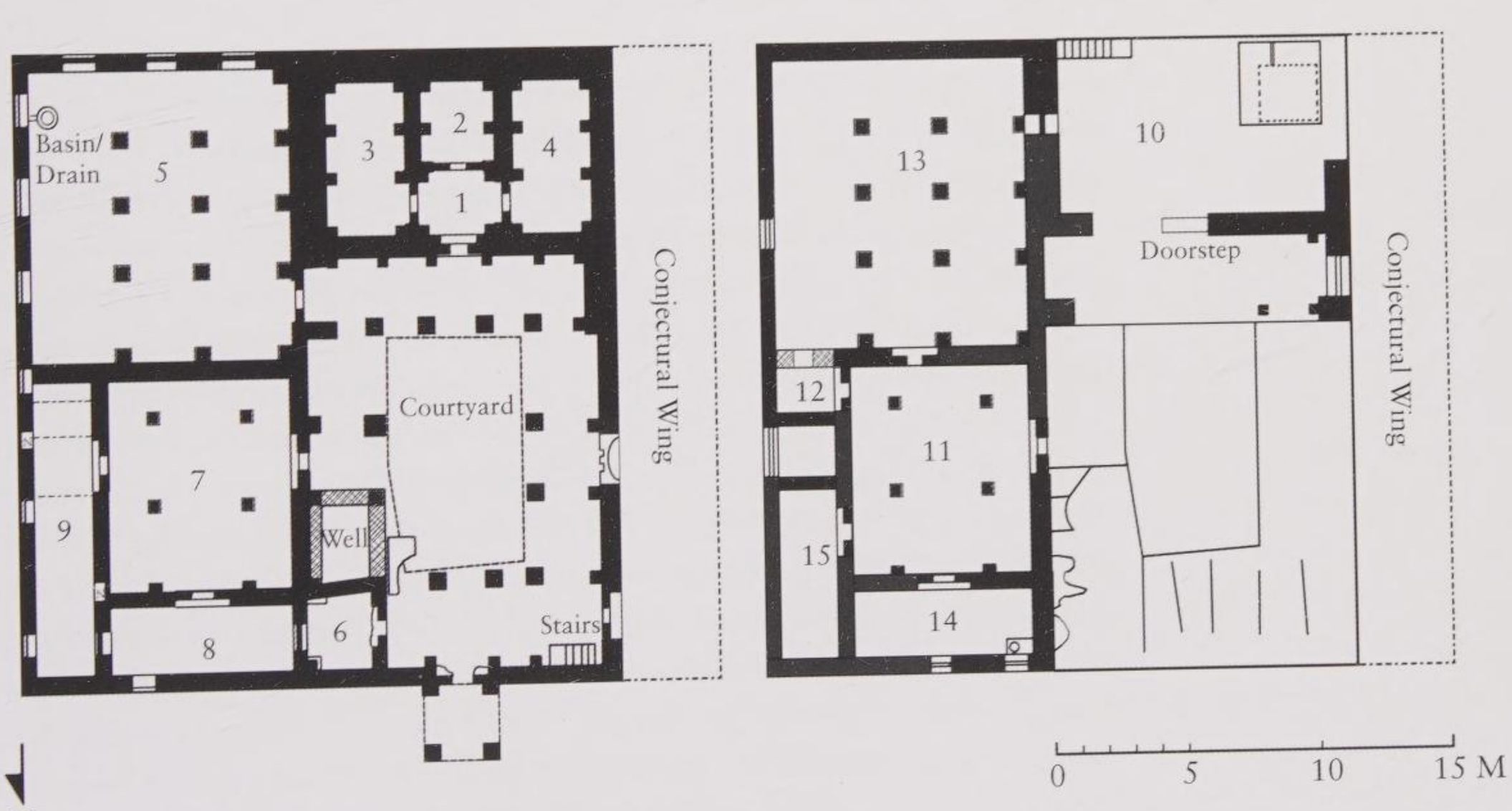


FIG. 4.5.
Plan of the monastery, c. 8th–11th century AD. Surwāyā.



epigraphic record is extremely spare, despite the relatively pristine appearance of the overall site. Only a handful of brief inscriptions have been found in the vicinity of the monastery and its neighboring town. The earliest are limited to five largely illegible epigraphs, all of which are attributable to the tenth century, on the basis of paleography. Although a few slightly longer and more substantial inscriptions have been found, they date no earlier than the thirteenth century and pertain not to the monastery or its temples, but rather to the subsequent fortress that was likely built under the Yajvapāla dynasty ruling nearby at Narwar. The most significant among these is an inscription found on the doorway of one of the temples, which records the construction of a fort gate in AD 1293–94 (VS 1350), during the reign of Queen Salahaṇadevī and the Yajvapāla prince (*māha-kumāra*) Sāhasamalla.[9]

Despite the paucity of written records, Surwāyā has long been associated with the Mattamayūras because of its clear Śaiva affiliation and its proximity to Kadwāhā and Ranod. It has sometimes been identified more specifically with the second sage named Śaṅkamaṭhikādhipati, or "lord" (*adhipati*) of the "Monastery of the Conch" (*śaṅka-maṭhika*), which is mentioned in the genealogy provided by the inscriptions at Ranod and the Gwalior Museum. The temptation to think of Surwāyā as Śaṅkamaṭhika has largely been born through a superficial similarity in name. However, the later inscriptional evidence from Surwāyā describes it as Sarasvatīpaṭṭana, or "town of Sarasvatī," which is etymologically unrelated to the name Śaṅkamaṭhika. Rather, the name is tied to the clan (gotra) of a community of brāhmaṇas who were present in the area in the late thirteenth century.[10] What ties the monastery to the Mattamayūras is thereby less the linguistic connections between modern Surwāyā and places mentioned in inscriptions than it is the forms of the monastery and the iconography of its temples.

Because of Surwāyā's layered building history, any analysis of built form must begin with an act of deconstruction, not only of changes introduced through colonial-era attempts at recovering the monastery's past but also, more importantly, through medieval-era expansions and renovations. Altogether, at least four or five phases of building can be traced through an analysis of the monastery's basic plan and structural components, and, more specifically, through the layout of pillars and beams that functioned as the monastery's primary system of support. Unlike in cases such as Kadwāhā, where the act of construction occurred at a single moment, Surwāyā's structural support system exhibits neither symmetry nor cohesion, but rather the coexistence of independent spatial units, each of which follows its own distinct structural logic (fig. 4.6). A number of other details point to additional discontinuities in the building as it appears today. These include the haphazard creation of room divisions, which sometimes obstruct windows, as seen in Room 9; the occasional awkwardness of doorways, such as that leading into Room 5; and variations in pillar types even within a seemingly unified space, as seen in the courtyard (see fig. 4.12).

The original monastery appears to be synonymous with a small, freestanding building occupying the southeast quadrant of the current building (Rooms 1–4) (see figs. 4.5, 4.7). Clearly visible through a break in the wall moldings, this early dwelling likely dates to the eighth century and may have functioned, in concept

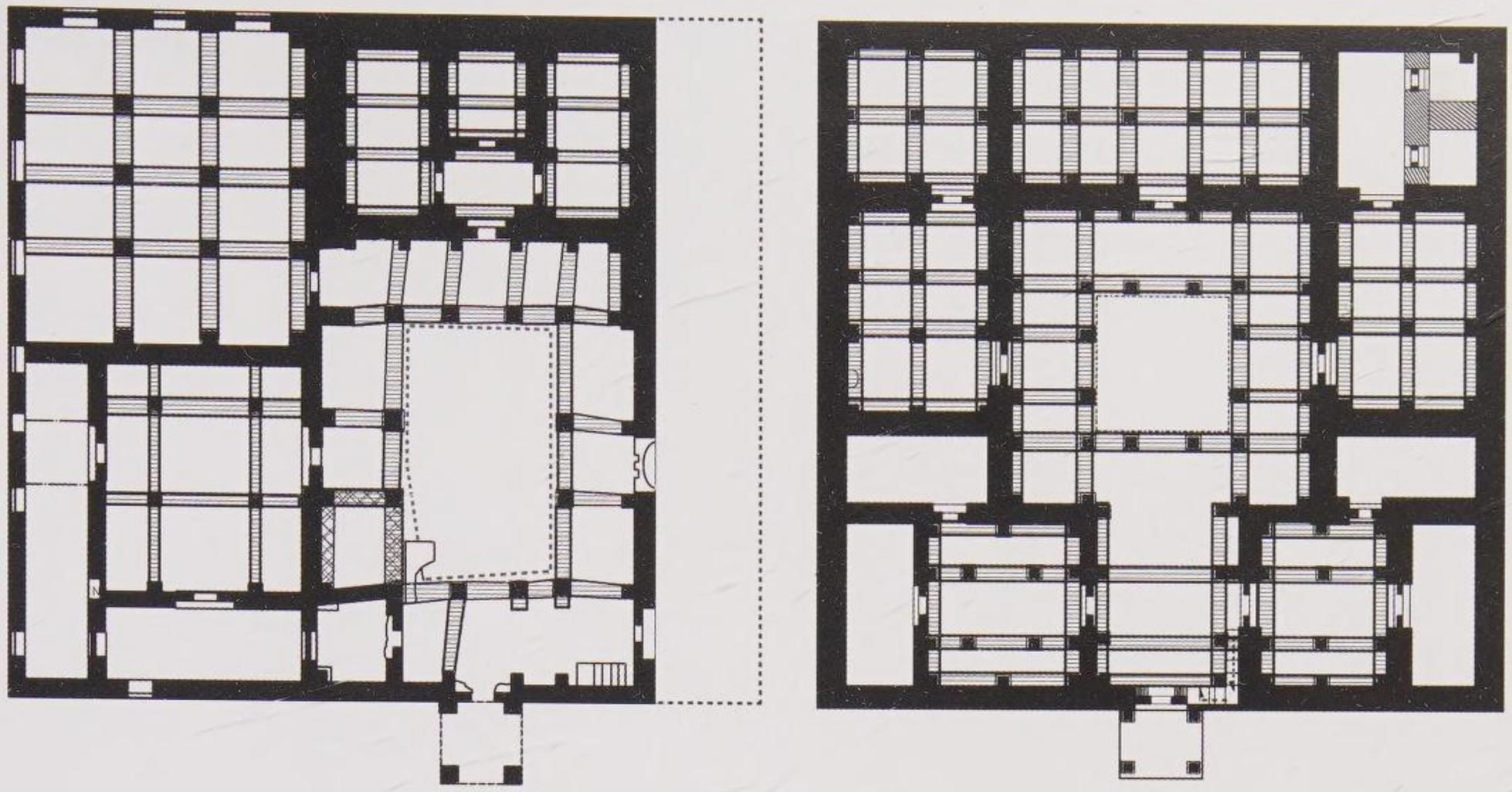
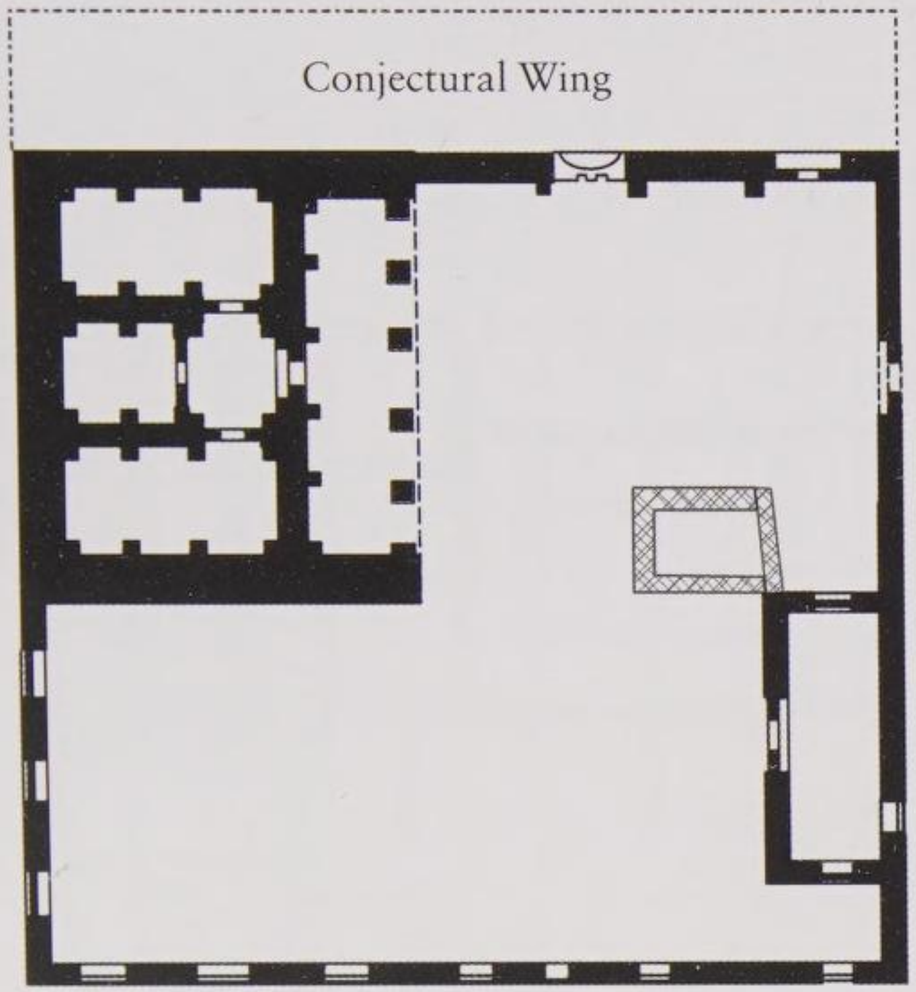


FIG. 4.6.
Comparison of the structural support systems of the monasteries at Surwāyā (left) and Kadwāhā (right).

as well as form, as a precursor to the original hermitage at Ranod. It faced north and consisted of two stories fronted by an elegant and open veranda, which was supported by pillars with octagonal shafts embellished on the top and bottom with vase-of-plenty (*pūrṇaghaṭa*) motifs (fig. 4.8). The entrance on the ground story was through a doorway positioned at the center of the veranda, which, in turn, led to a tiny entry hall followed by three rooms: a small, square room in the center, flanked by two larger, longitudinal rooms bisymmetrically arranged on either side.

The hierarchical significance of the central north–south axis and the small room that lay upon its culmination was emphasized in two ways. The first was through the building's layout and proportions; the monastery's interior appears to have been laid on an approximately square grid, with the dimensions of the central room providing a frame of reference for the remainder of the structure, as will be seen in this chapter. The second was through the doorframe, which was embellished by carefully carved vine-scrolls and a small sculpted figure of the auspicious elephant-headed god Gaṇeśa, son of Śiva and Pārvatī, situated in a niche at the center of the door lintel (fig. 4.9). In addition to marking the building as sacred architecture, or more specifically as a sanctified dwelling, the sculptural style of these ornamental details suggests a date in the eighth century.[11] The likelihood of an eighth-century date is fairly significant, because it situates Surwāyā as the earliest preserved monastery and the beginning of a tradition seen fully realized at Ranod.

Unfortunately, little remains of the second story, save a few fragments of the exterior walls, which suggest a plan similar to that below it. The best-preserved portion is the upper veranda, which, as at Ranod, was once fitted with a half-wall (fig. 4.10). Although this half-wall no longer survives, its former presence is suggested by the form of a surviving pillar, which consists of a plain square support surmounted by an elegant octagonal shaft, the latter of which would have been easily visible from below. The inner facade was further embellished by pairs of ornamental horse-heads set above large functional niches. A deep-set window,



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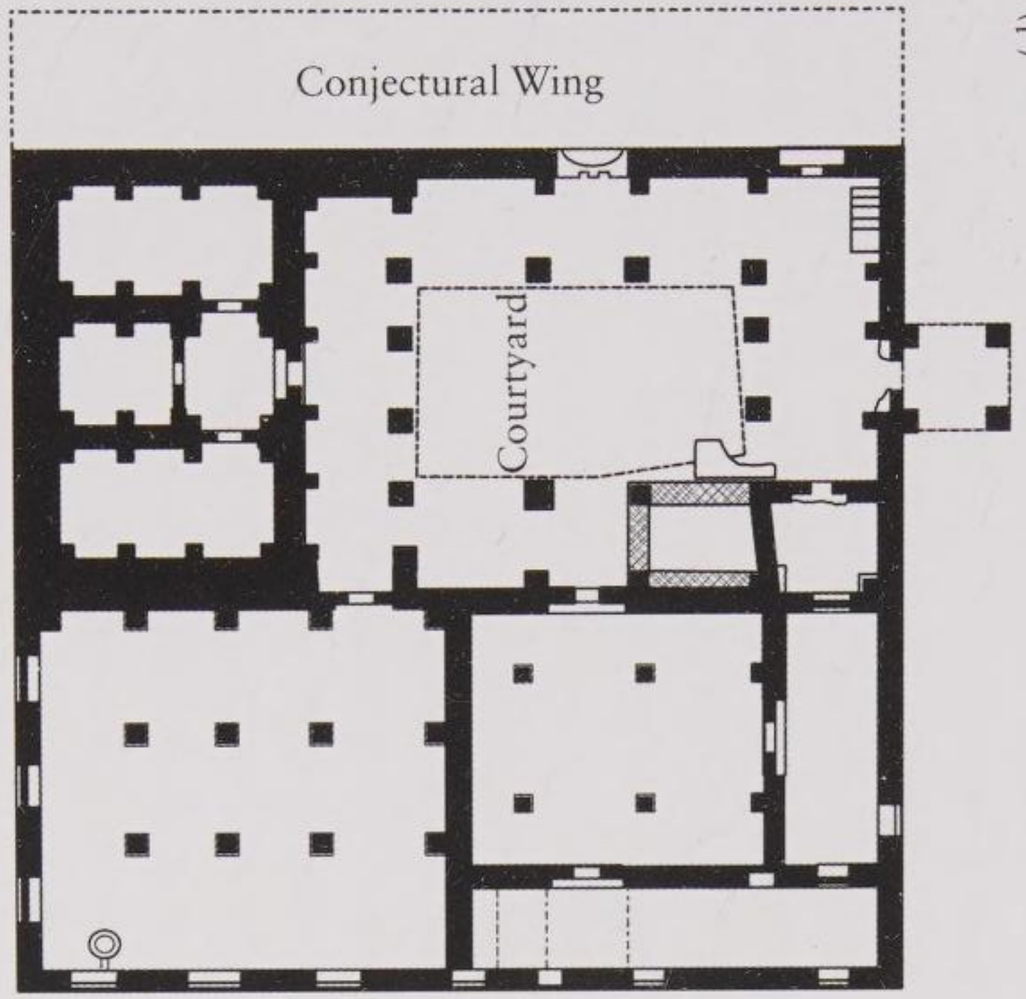

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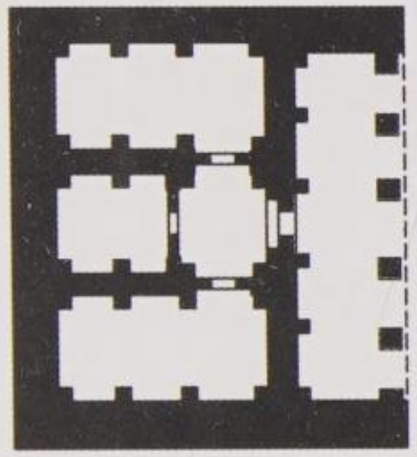

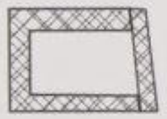

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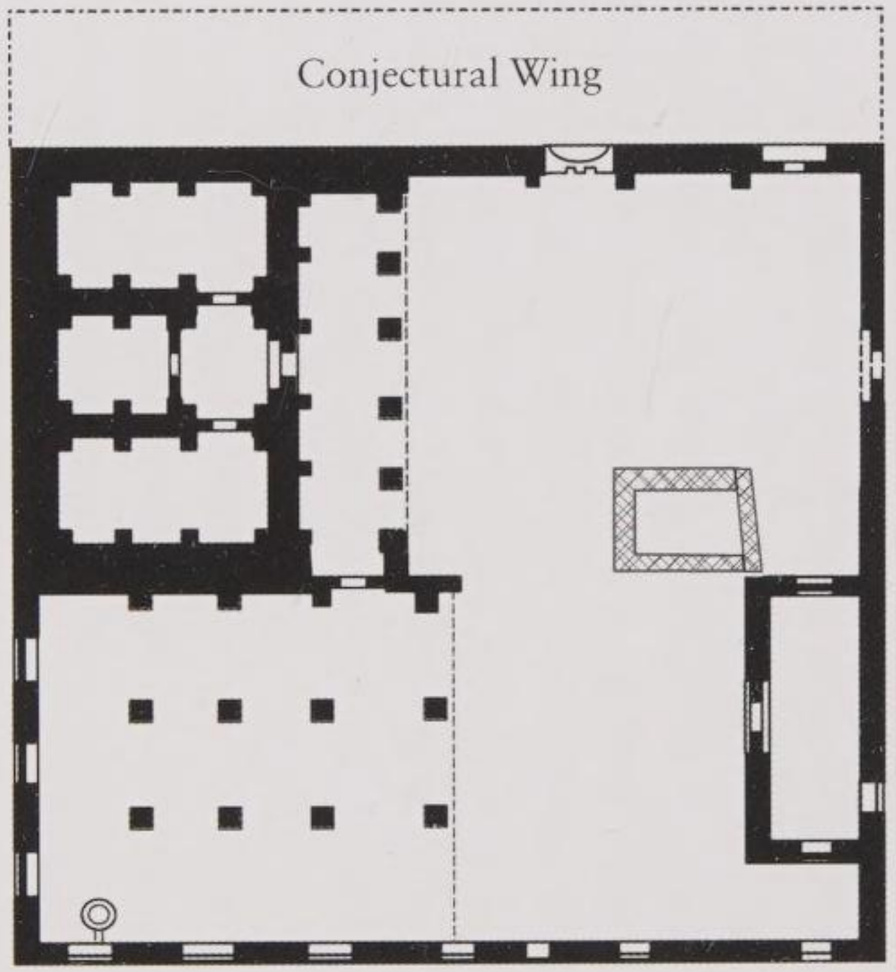


(c)

FIG. 4.7.
Proposed chronology of building at Surwāya:
(a) original hermitage, c. 8th century AD;
(b) first enlargement;
(c) possible second set of additions;
(d) final renovation and reorientation of the monastery, c. 10th century AD.

FIG. 4.8.
Veranda of the original hermitage, c. 8th century AD. Seen from the west, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.9.
Entrance to the original hermitage, c. 8th century AD. Seen from the north, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.10.
Overview of upper story, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the north, monastery, Surwāyā.

fitted with a netted screen (*jala*) carved with a diamond (*ratna*) pattern, would have let light filter inward, illuminating the upper veranda from the west. Entrance from the veranda into the upper story's interior was again through a central doorway, indicated today through the remnants of a doorstep. Although not much more of the interior still stands, one additional detail is worth noting. Just visible on the surface of the original floor in the southwest corner of the building is the outline of what may have originally been a shallow square basin, which suggests a bathing chamber, positioned similarly to the ones seen at both Kadwāhā and Ranod (fig. 4.11). Unfortunately, because of the damage, it is impossible to know precisely where the staircase providing passage between the upper and lower stories was positioned, although it seems possible that there may have been an enclosed stairwell, accessible through the doorway along the lower story's east veranda, which currently leads to the space enclosed by Room 5 on the plan (fig. 4.12).

Over the course of the next two centuries, this original hermitage at Surwāyā became completely subsumed through repeated expansions and transformations, the relative chronology of which can be hypothesized through a process of logical deduction (see fig. 4.7). The first addition was likely the establishment of an enclosure wall (prākāra) around the original dwelling, discernable from the relative absence of obvious breaks in the wall moldings seen elsewhere on the exterior. This moment may have also seen the addition of a small freestanding room on the north side (Room 8), which had windows that were visibly obstructed by rooms that were likely added later.

The next phase of building—which may have been either contemporary with, or just following, the first set of expansions—was likely the fashioning of an open hall directly to the east of the original hermitage (Room 5). This hall became, through the addition of a later wall, an enormous enclosed room that dominated the entirety of the monastery's southeast quadrant. It was supported by massive

FIG. 4.11.
Overview of the monastery, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the south, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.12.
Southeast corner of the courtyard, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

square (rucaka) pillars that divided the space into twelve bays, but the heaviness of the supports was offset by the light and ventilation provided by the six large, grated windows—three positioned on each of the outward-facing walls—that effectively transformed what may have been a dark chamber into an airy and easily habitable space (fig. 4.13). Truly massive in scale (35.1 by 30.5 feet, or 10.7 by 9.3 meters), this room was by far the largest single space found not only at Surwāyā but also at any surviving monastic site. Its function must have been congregational, and possibly also ritual; the remains of a drain and basin, similar to that seen in Kadwāhā's main congregational chamber (Room 7), can be found in the southeastern corner of the room, directly below the last of the three windows (fig. 4.14).

Up to this point, the acts of renovation may have enlarged the monastery at Surwāyā, but they did not fundamentally change its underlying conception. The building remained an open and airy hermitage, consisting of a handful of small, freestanding structures situated in an open-air enclosure. The next set of renovations, however, more radically transformed the nature of the site. New rooms filled out the

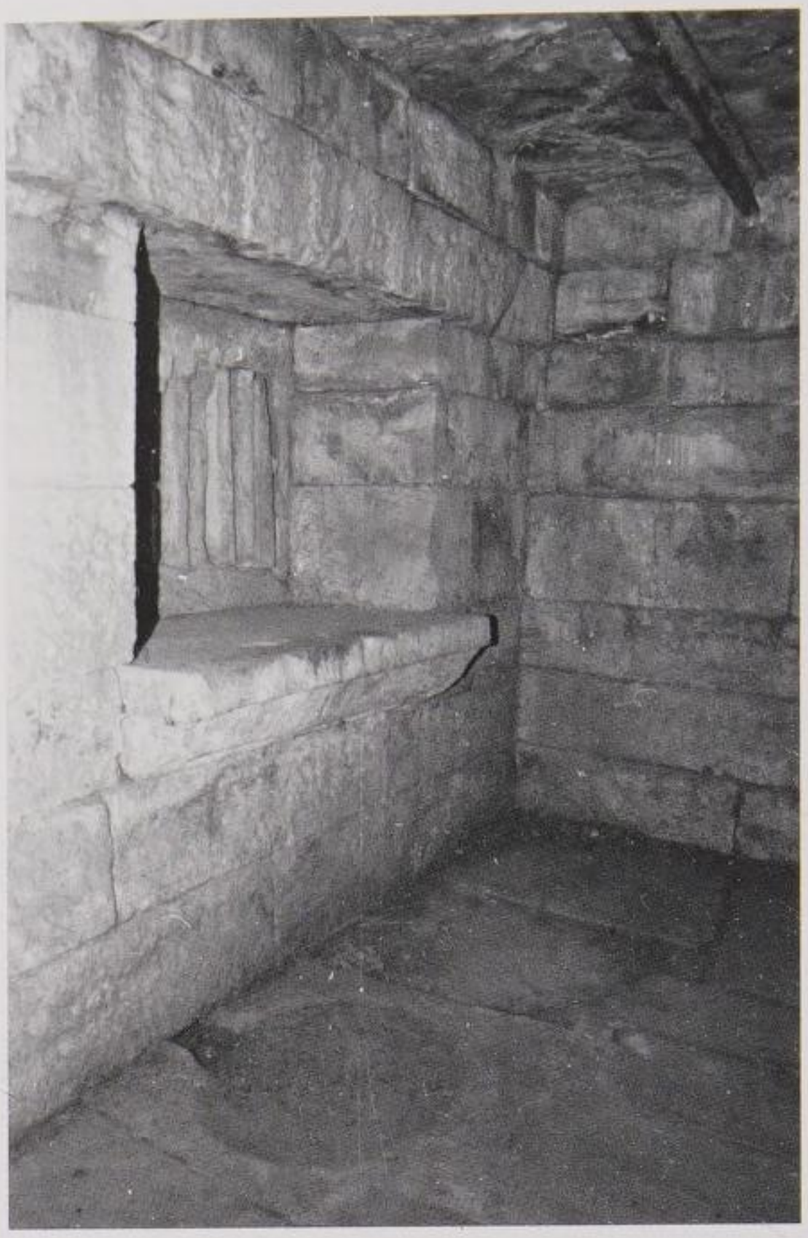


FIG. 4.13.
Interior of Room 6, c. 9th or 10th century AD. Seen from the north, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.14.
Detail of a window and drain in the southeast corner of Room 6, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the northwest, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

northwest quadrant, notably bringing Room 8 into a more cohesive and integrated plan. The courtyard was regularized through the creation of new hallways and the establishment of a small room (Room 6), likely for storage, just to the north of the earlier well and directly facing a doorway leading to the west. The most significant change was the addition of an upper story, which was likely built entirely at a single moment. A miniature shrine tower (sarvatobhadra) rising from the roof makes it relatively easy to date this final act of expansion to the middle or late tenth century.[12] The effect on the original building was quite profound. Once an outward-facing open shelter, the older hermitage became transformed into just one of several key components of a new, fully enclosed interior.

The renovations made at this tenth-century moment reveal an orchestrated effort not only to bring cohesion to a building that was inherently fragmented, but also to articulate the site's transition from a quiet place of ascetic retreat into a monumental monastic institution more akin to the dwelling at Kadwāhā than to that at Ranod. From the exterior, the new building was reconfigured to include a similar small portico marking the primary entrance along the north facade (see figs. 4.1, 4.3–4.5). Despite the constraints of the preexisting architectural components, the new builders were able to design a carefully conceived new interior program. On the ground story, the building's internal components were reorganized into four discrete architectural units, each occupying a quadrant of the building and equipped with its own separate entrance. Passage from one quadrant to another was facilitated through pillared hallways around the courtyard (figs. 4.15, 4.16), which were sheltered by an overhanging eave (chādya). In the process, care was taken to incorporate the original hermitage, the veranda of which became part of the circuit of hallways (see figs. 4.8, 4.12).

FIG. 4.15.
Hall to the west of the courtyard, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.16.
Courtyard and main entrance to the monastery, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

Although the courtyard itself was neither square nor centrally situated within the monastic dwelling, it functioned as a necessary point of junction and circulation, through which one would have to pass in order to access both the upper story and the other main sections of the ground story. As at Kadwāhā, it served as the hub of intersecting axes, which created strong north–south and east–west movements and formed a determining factor in the overall distribution of rooms. The north–south axis led directly to the older, original monastery, thereby retaining its primacy as a point of reference and also establishing it as a crucial component of the newly expanding building. The east–west axis, however, created a second focus within the building, which moved deliberately on a path parallel

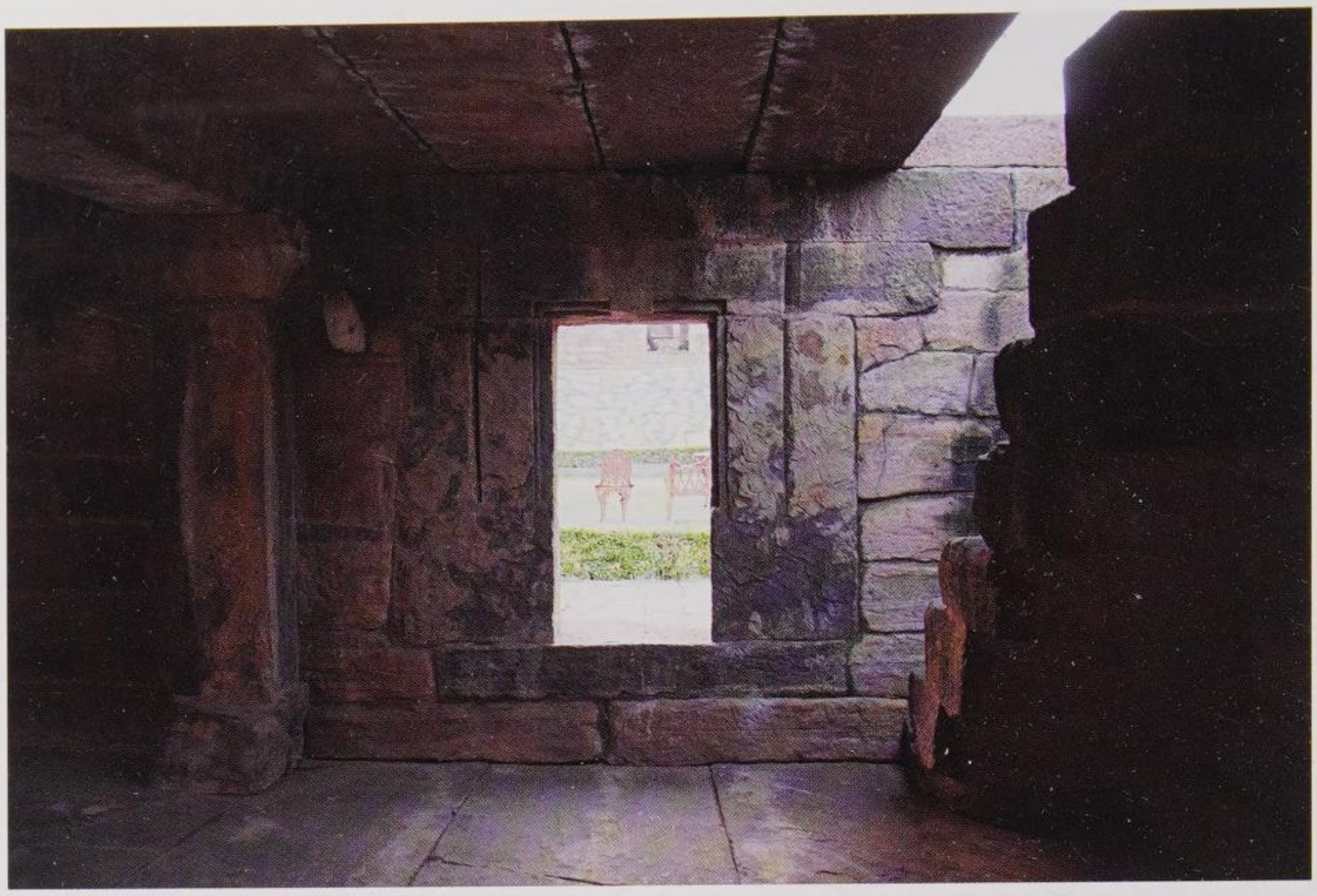


FIG. 4.17.
View of the staircase and the entrance to the missing western wing, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.18.
View of the eastern wing and doorways to Rooms 7 and 11, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the west, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

to the temples standing outside the monastery's walls, and toward what may have been a second entrance along the monastery's west side. This second entrance may have originally been preceded by an outward-facing veranda, as indicated through foundation markings in older archaeological photographs (see fig. 4.3). Alternatively, it is possible that the monastery possessed an additional wing of rooms along the west side, which may have been entered through both the courtyard's center and through the northern hall (fig. 4.17).

This new east–west axial passage was highly significant. When followed through the monastery's interior, it led directly through the center of the courtyard and to a ritually significant cluster of rooms (Rooms 7–9) (see figs. 4.4, 4.18). The doorway leading into this cluster was flanked on either side by a set of horse-head pegs, similar to those seen at Kadwāhā and Ranod, and adorned with a vine-scroll pattern running vertically along its upper jambs, in emulation of the entrance to the older monastic dwelling. While this ornamentation marked the entrance as a particularly distinct threshold, the layout of the nested rooms that followed formed an appropriately complex unit. The first room was a sizable hall (Room 7), which functioned both as a congregational space and a processional zone, leading directly toward a long rectangular room running along the monastery's east side (Room 9) (figs. 4.19, 4.20).

If viewed only at the level of the ground story plan, these rooms seem fairly unremarkable. However, when experienced through real space, they unfolded in a rather dramatic way. The passage eastward along the axis from the courtyard led

FIG. 4.19.
View of Room 7, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the west, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.20.
View of Room 9, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

through two doorways, the first of which opened up into a large, pillared hall (Room 7), and the second of which culminated in a long, rectangular room extending north–south along the eastern side of the building (Room 9). What made the movement particularly striking was less in the layout of the rooms than in a play in scale and light that occurred at the culmination of the passage. The space directly past the second doorway was a particularly pronounced spot that was differentiated from the rest of the room by a raised ceiling and illuminated dramatically from above by a clerestory-like grated window (fig. 4.21; compare the upper and lower stories in fig. 4.5). Because the remainder of the room was topped by a relatively low ceiling, the effect was quite striking (compare Room 9 with Rooms 12 and 15 in fig. 4.5). Two factors suggest that this room likely functioned as a particularly sanctified space within the monastery's architectural program. The first was its position at the end of the east–west axis. The second was the fact that the miniature sarvatobhadra shrine above the building was positioned directly above the illuminated area beyond its entrance. While the axial passage would have led the visitor directly to this space, the sarvatobhadra shrine above the building visibly marked its sanctity, even from a distance far beyond the monastery's outer walls, as will be discussed further in this chapter (fig. 4.22).

If the renovations made at the level of the ground story represented an effort to unify a fragmented history of building, the job was completed through the design of the upper floor. The fact that the upper story was a product of a single moment can easily be seen in the regularity of the wall joinings and the great care that was taken

FIG. 4.21.
Overview of the monastery, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the east, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.22.
Overview of the monastery, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the west, Surwāyā.

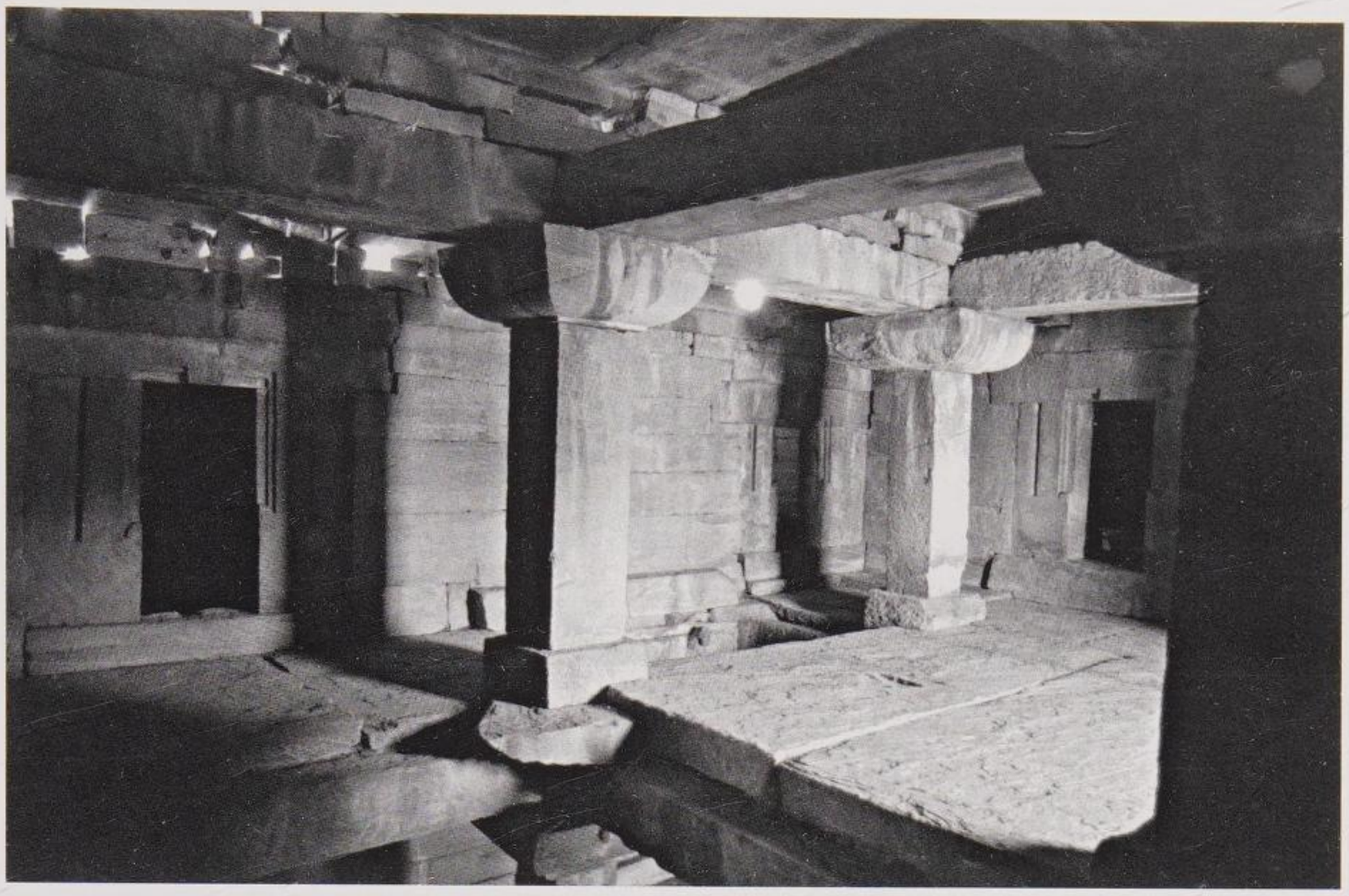


FIG. 4.23.
View of Room 11, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, upper story, monastery, Surwāyā.

to make movement from room to room as fluid as possible. Access was provided via the stairway on the north side of the courtyard, which was located, probably not coincidentally, in precisely the same position as the stairway leading up to the second story at Kadwāhā (see fig. 3.19). Unfortunately, both the stairwell and the rooms that followed most directly from this point of access are long lost. However, they seem, from the dimensions of the plan, to have comprised a similar single-bay circumambulatory path around the open court, following the plan of the hallways below. This path then would have provided access to three distinct sets of rooms arranged around the open court. To the south was the wing of rooms that were built as part of the earlier monastic building, which, in the process of incorporation, became fundamentally reoriented along the courtyard's north–south axis, in the same fashion as the rooms directly below. In the process, the original stairway, which may have been formed as an extension of the earlier building's veranda, as noted previously, was likely dismantled or otherwise lost (see figs. 4.5, 4.10).

Unfortunately, neither the veranda nor the rooms along the western wing still survive, and very little can be said about their original form. However, the eastern wing is well preserved. Directly following the entrance from the open court was a sizable pillared hall (Room 11), which gave way in turn to two longitudinal chambers (Rooms 14–15), all of which approximately followed the shape of the rooms just beneath (fig. 4.23). However, this hall also was endowed with entrances that provided easy access into the large room to the south (Room 13).[13] As a result, the flow between rooms was continuous and uninterrupted, allowing residents to pass easily among different interlocking spaces. In addition to the cohesion in the overall program, the rooms within the second story also appear to be more deliberately differentiated in terms of their ritual and residential functions. Particularly notable within the group is the northernmost room, in which was installed a raised *yoni-*

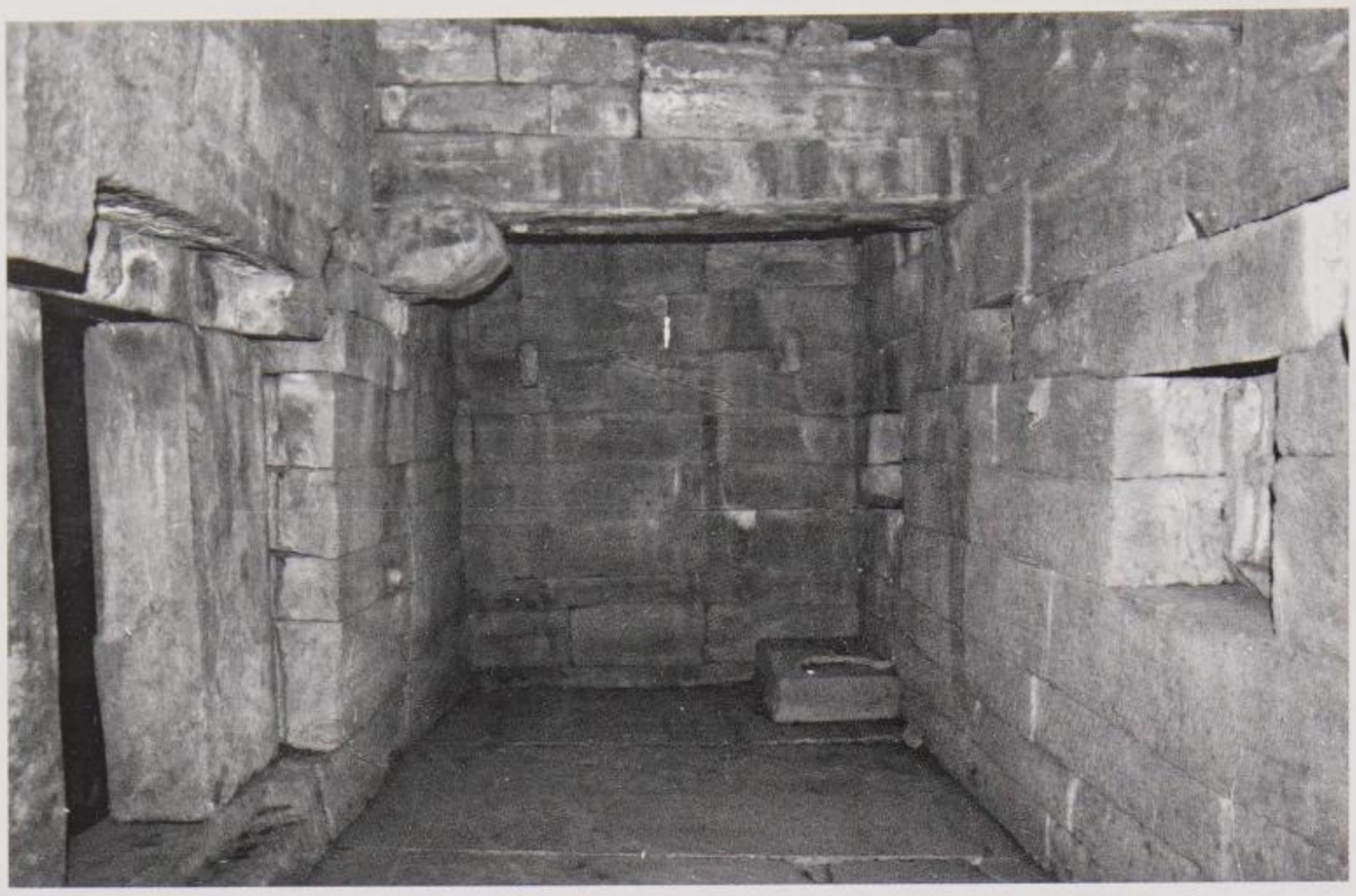


FIG. 4.24.
View of Room 14, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the east, upper story, monastery, Surwāyā.

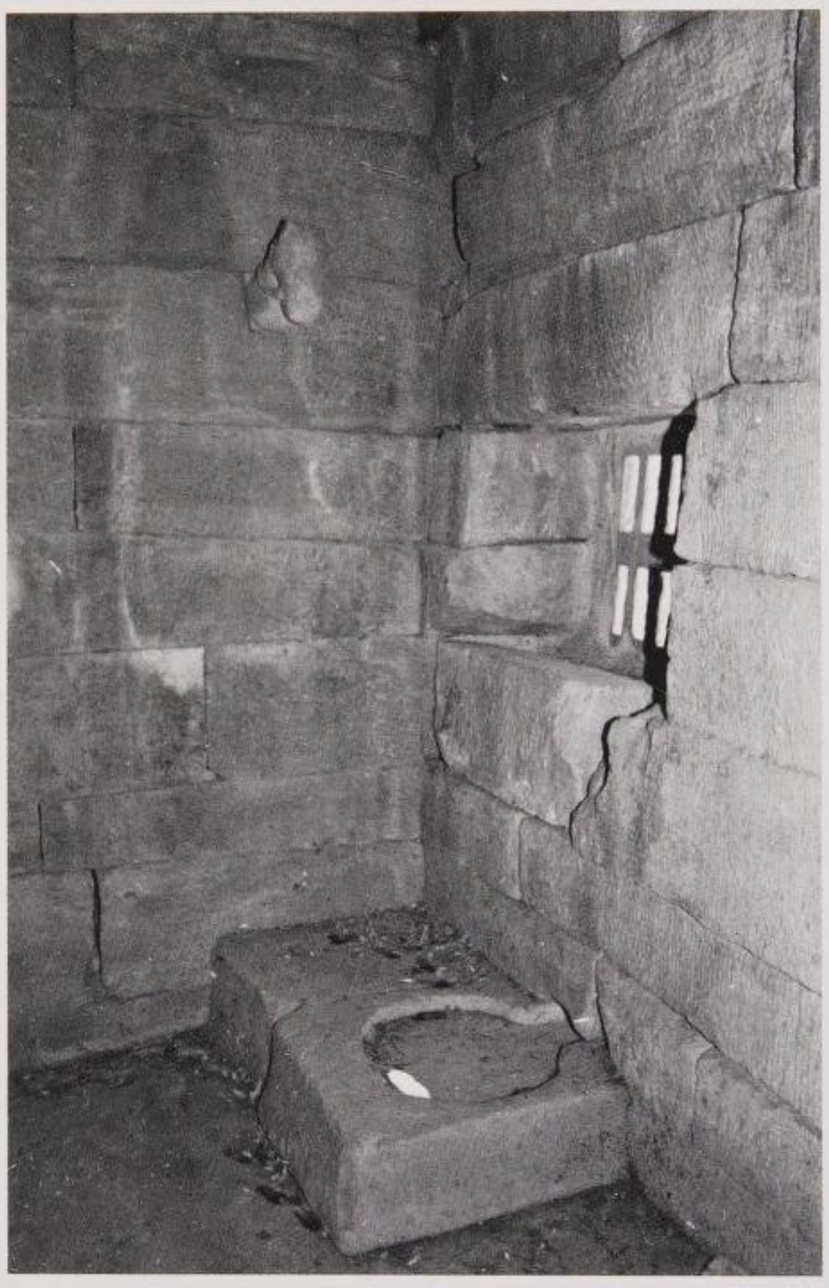


FIG. 4.25.
Drain and raised slab in northwest corner of Room 14, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southeast, upper story, monastery, Surwāyā.

shaped pedestal, likely for a small icon, that was fully equipped with a drain leading outward to the north (Room 14) (figs. 4.24, 4.25).

The construction of the monastery's second story appears as a final and completing moment in a broader reorientation of the monastery as a whole. The crux of the project resided in the courtyard, which, as at Kadwāhā, formed the hub of intersecting axes that created meaningful relationships among different spaces within the monastery's interior. Whereas the north–south axis maintained a strict alignment between the monastery's old and new entrances, the east–west axis drew attention and directed movement into what was likely a second ritually significant section of the building, namely, the space directly below the miniature shrine tower (*sarvatobhadra*). The miniature shrine tower, in turn, signaled the monastery's newly reinforced status as sacred architecture by utilizing visual vocabularies seen more frequently in nearby temples.[14]

In this sense, the act of renovations in the mid- to late tenth century carefully maintained the primacy of the older building, while consciously creating a second focus for ritual activity in the new eastern wing. It may be that the deep formal engagement with the monastery's earlier history was rooted in the knowledge of the ritual actions that went into the original determination and establishment of the site, notably in the original rites of consecration and in the underlying proportions.[15] In any case, this decision appears to have been stimulated by the addition of new temples to the north of the monastic dwelling, and particularly of the large main temple that still stands by the monastery's side. The overall act transformed a formerly open and airy retreat, following the model at Ranod, into an interiorized monastery more typical of a larger center, such as at Kadwāhā.

Even so, in effecting these transformations, care was taken to retain the primacy of the original eighth-century dwelling, through plays in both placement

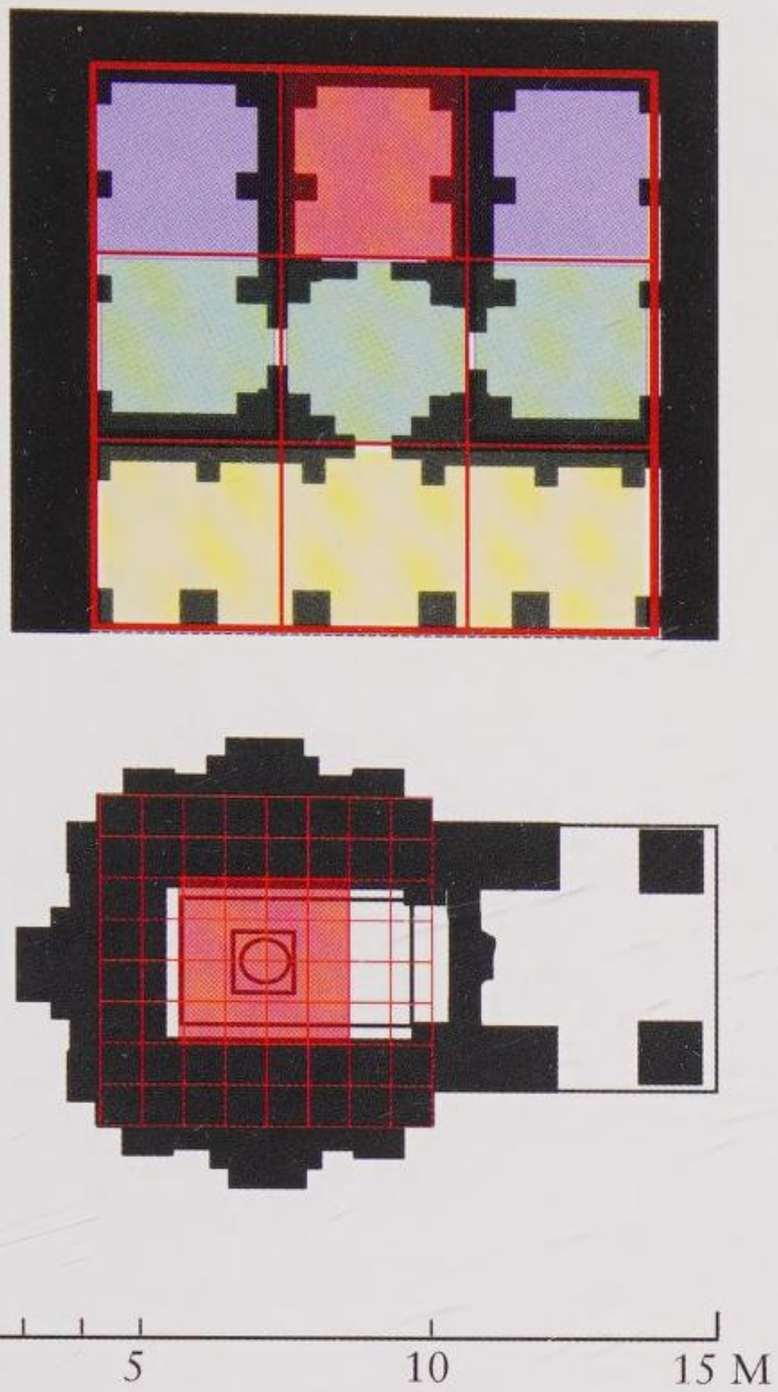


FIG. 4.26.
Drawing showing the relative proportions of the original hermitage and later temple, c. 8th–10th century AD. Surwāyā.

and scale. In terms of scale, the original monastic dwelling formed a base unit that determined both the size of the new quadrants added to its north and east and the dimensions of the main temple standing just outside (fig. 4.26). In terms of orientation, the original building determined both the alignment of the main north–south axis running through the monastery and the positioning of the temple beyond. More specifically, the temple was built so that the threshold between the main sanctum and its portico (maṇḍapa) was aligned with the eastern extremity of the original monastery's veranda. The new eastern wings of the monastery, by contrast, occupied a distinct zone that ran parallel to the temple. Such acts of reorientation begin to suggest a changing and carefully negotiated relationship between the interior world of the monastery and the growing temple arena beyond its walls, as will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Reconstructing Terāhī

The monastery at Terāhī, like its counterpart at Surwāyā, was a building with a fragmented history, likely beginning in the eighth or ninth century, that was brought together through a decisive act of renovation in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. However, its rural location has rendered it comparatively obscure. Even today, getting to Terāhī requires a fairly arduous journey. The route from the closest major highway to the west, near Isagarh, is only partially paved and passes through approximately 19 miles (30 kilometers) of fields and wilderness between tiny villages in a trip that, depending on road conditions and time of year, can easily take three or four hours. The difficulties of travel have no doubt played a significant role in Terāhī's historiography. The site itself was discovered only by accident in 1883–84, when Alexander Cunningham's draftsman, Jamna Shanker Bhatt, stumbled across it during a failed search for a different place that was rumored to possess an inscription of historical import. Although Bhatt's published report detailed Terāhī's importance as a temple site also possessing a number of memorial pillars, it included no mention of the monastery, which remained unknown until its discovery in 1914–15. Even then, it took another two decades before the site was revisited, in 1934–35 by Garde, who simply noted the presence of the "ruins" of a Hindu monastery, enclosed within a modern fort (*garḍhi*) that had, by that point, been mostly stripped away.[16]

Despite its present-day remove, Terāhī's proximity to the ancient Madhumatī River would have been a key advantage during the early medieval period, as it would have connected it to routes leading to larger regional centers, including Narwar, Chanderi, Gwalior, and Vidīśa. The monastic site likely preceded the development of the broader village, as it occupied a privileged position not far

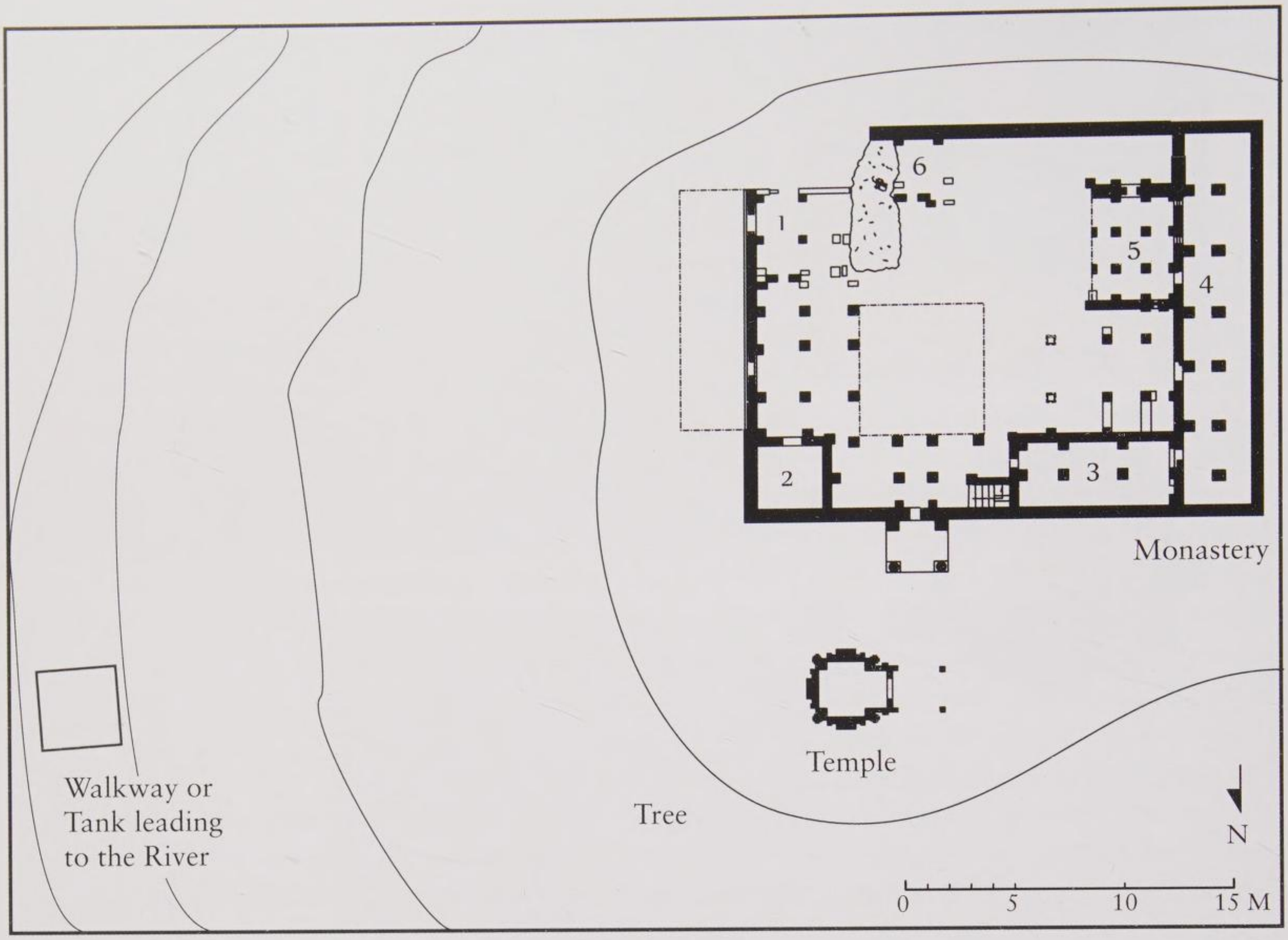


FIG. 4.27.
Plan of the monastery site, c. 8th–11th century AD. Terāhī.

from the Madhumatī River, which today flows only during the months of the monsoon season (fig. 4.27). During the remainder of the year, the rich silt along the riverbed is cultivated as farmland. The remainder of the village moves centrifugally outward to the monastery's west for a short distance, beyond which stretch many miles of wilderness and fields. Although its precise origin date is unknown, Terāhī was likely already emerging by the tenth and eleventh centuries, as attested to by the presence of at least one other temple, today housing the goddess Mohaja Māta, and at least three memorial pillar inscriptions dated between AD 903 and 905 (VS 960 and 962). These pillar inscriptions, which record the death of local individuals in two different battles, attest to Terāhī's growing significance within both local and regional circuits. Whereas the first battle occurred between two local lords (*mahāsāmantādhipatis*) named Guṇarāja and Undabhaṭṭa, the second was a grander effort two years later, in AD 905 (VS 962), to repel the Rāṣṭrakūta kings during one of their many northward excursions.[17]

Although the intensifying scale of these conflicts may signify Terāhī's growing status as a place in the tenth century, it does not necessarily shed light on its identity at earlier moments. As at Surwāyā, the monastery at Terāhī no longer retains any trace of an inscription, and the village as a whole does not possess any that can be dated farther back. Regardless, Terāhī has been identified tentatively,

FIG. 4.28.
Overview of the monastic site, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the northwest, Terāhī.

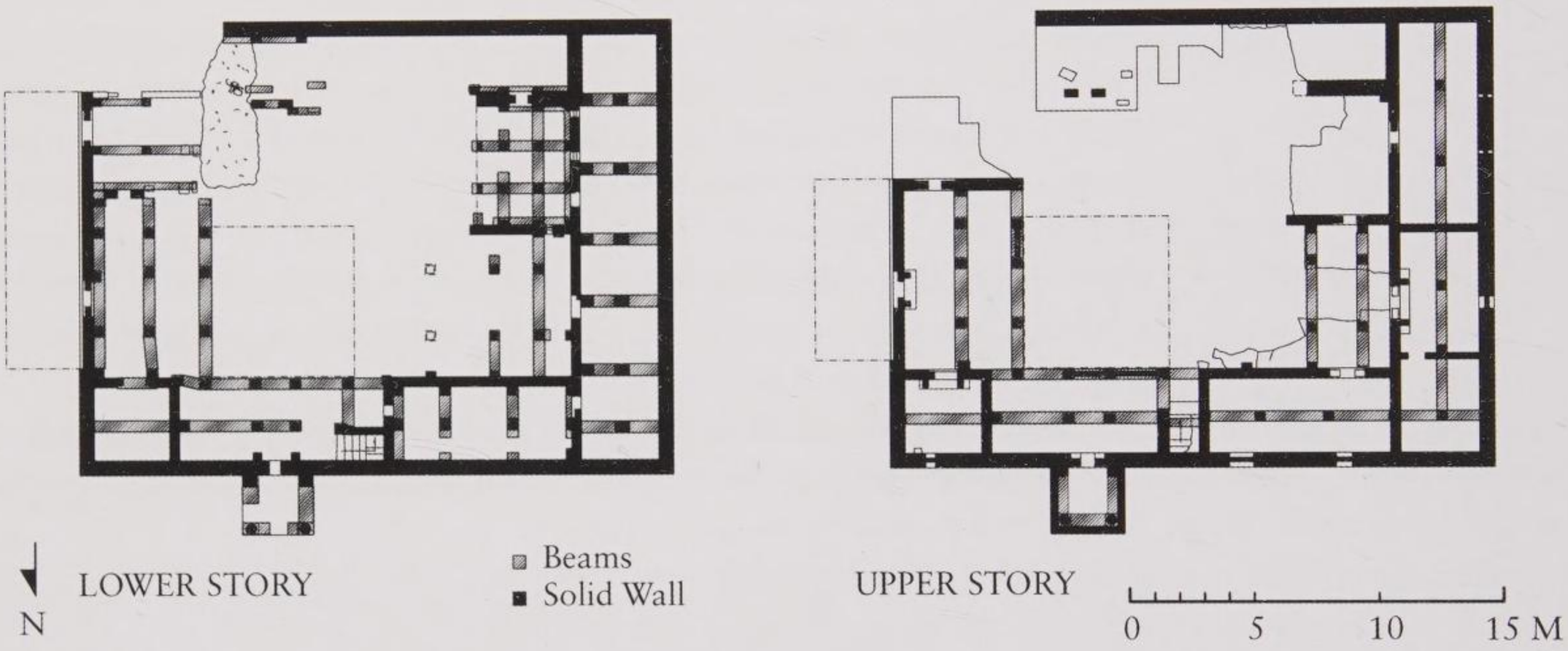
although not conclusively, as the place called "Terambi," associated with the sage named as Terambipāla in select Mattamayūra inscriptions.[18] It is possible that this was the case, as the dates can be matched; given his position in the lineage, Terambipāla, if he was indeed a historical sage, would have lived approximately in the eighth century. However, there is still reason to be cautious. While modern-day "Terāhī" bears some linguistic relation to "Terambi," it remains uncertain whether they were in fact the same place. The relation may instead be somewhat more generic. The term itself may come from a shared Sanskrit root, *tera,* that can translate as a balsam or balsamine, a variety of impatiens that is very common in India, and may thus simply signify a place covered in balsamine flowers—just as *Kadamba-guha,* as seen in earlier chapters, may simply connote a cave (*guha*) marked by a Kadamba tree. Further complicating the case is the more significant fact that Terāhī is described by the name "Madhuveṇī," another name for the Madhumatī River, in one of the surviving memorial pillars; this may indicate that it was related to the place described as Madhumatī, which was understood also as "Mattamayūra" in Kalachuri inscriptions.[19]

Fortunately, Terāhī's entangled history can be parsed through the monastery's many moments of building, which are all the more visible because of the architecture's fragmentary nature. When approached today, the monastery appears half-buried in a mound of dirt and debris, which has completely subsumed the first-story exterior. The entire eastern wing has long disappeared, as have most of the rooms around the central courtyard, which itself can be traced only through foundation markings (figs. 4.28, 4.29). This state of disrepair is fortuitous in a fashion, as it lays bare the underlying structure of the building. As a result, it is possible to trace, and occasionally to date, at least three or four distinct phases through which the site grew from a fairly small-scale establishment into a massive complex.

As at Surwāyā, the clearest evidence for phasing comes through an analysis of the positioning of pillars and beams, which indicates the presence of several

FIG. 4.29.
Overview of the interior courtyard, c. 8th–11th century AD. Seen from the southwest, monastery, Terāhī.

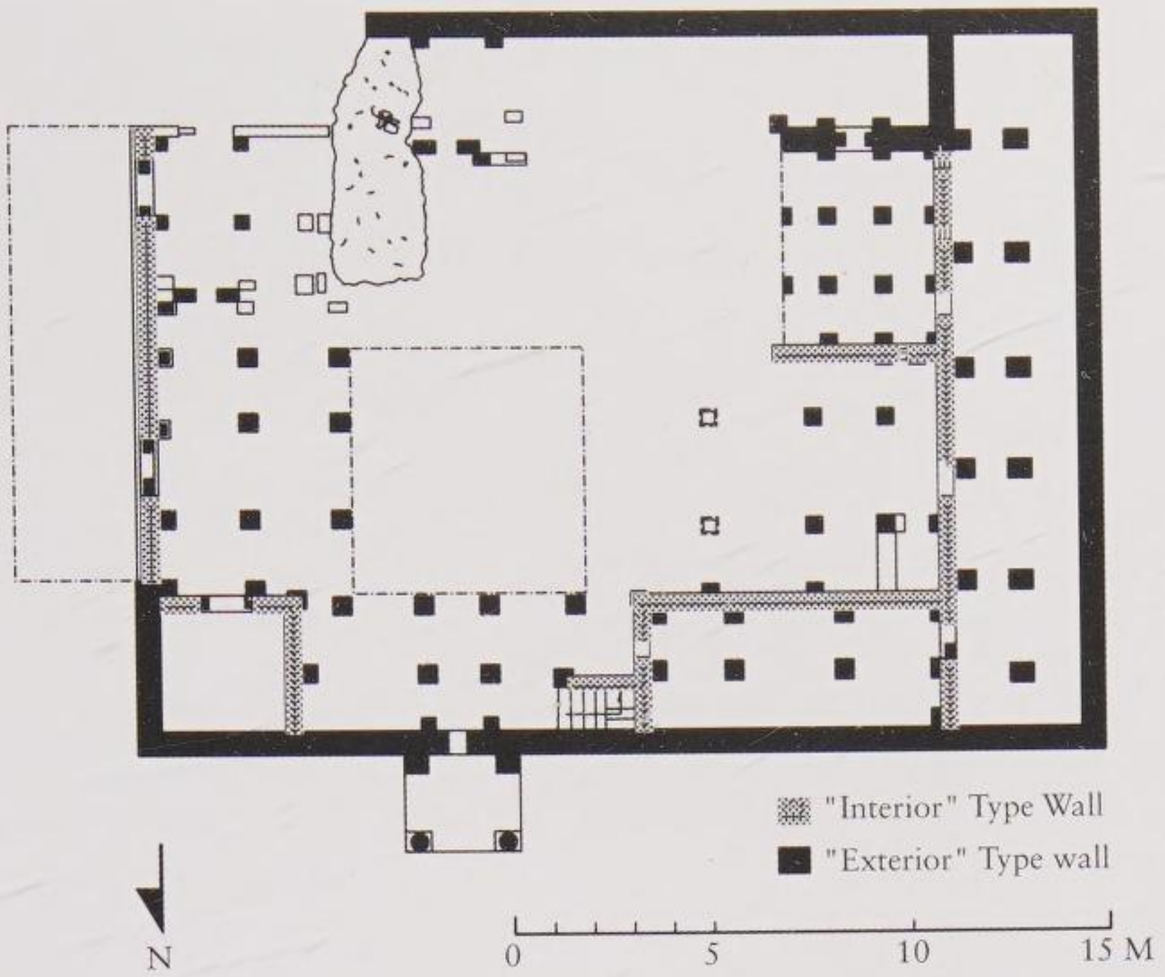
FIG. 4.30.
Plan of the structural support system, c. 8th–11th century AD. Terāhī.

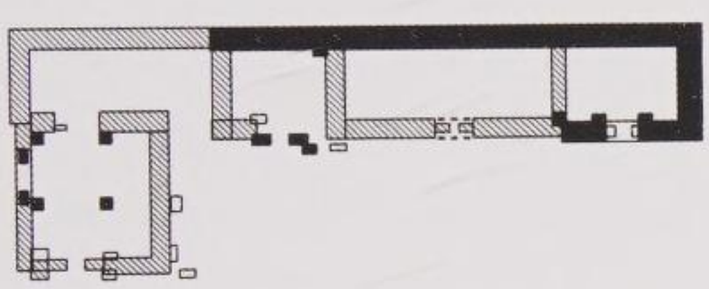


discrete units within the monastery's ground plan. Each stood on a separate structural grid, and each employed a distinctive pillar type (fig. 4.30). The first was a small room (Room 1) near the southeast corner of the monastery, once supported by nine pillars laid out on a 3-by-3 grid. The pillars themselves were square (rucaka) but not plain; rather, they were embellished with ample foliate roundels on the upper portion of their shafts, following a design that dates back as far as the Guptas, but with a form that was closely related to eighth- and ninth-century examples at nearby sites (figs. 4.32, 4.33). While pillars were among the architectural elements most subject to reuse, the fact that they occupy their own distinct structural grid makes it likely that they were original to this particular room.[20] The second discrete unit was a rectangular room, to the south and west of the open court, laid out on a 4-by-4 grid and employing pillars of a simpler

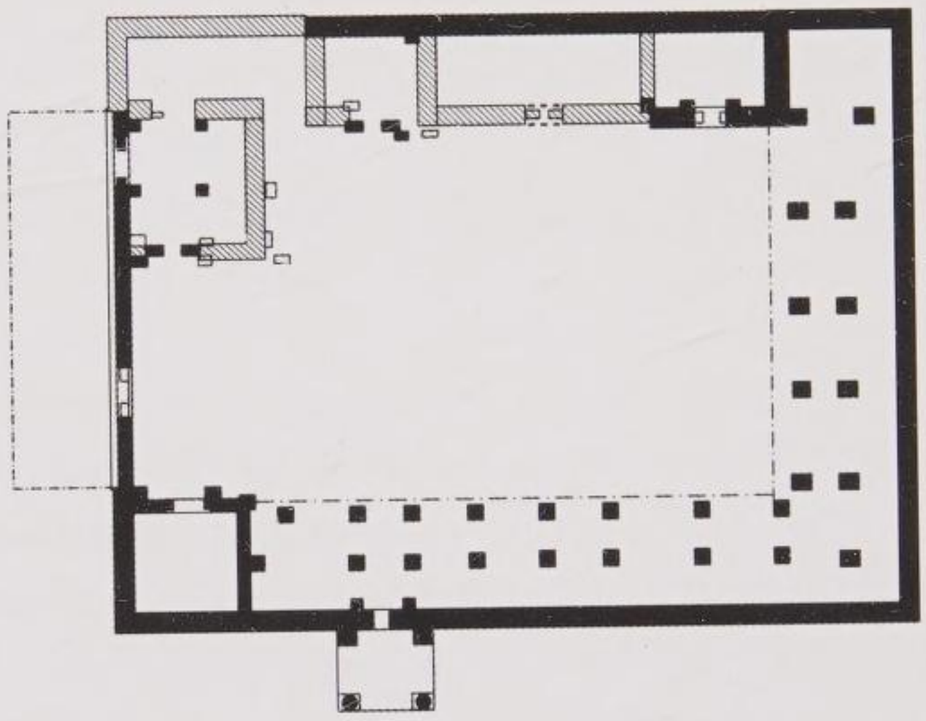
FIG. 4.31.
Plan of the lower story, showing the use of "interior-" and "exterior-" type walls, c. 8th–11th century AD. Terāhī.

FIG. 4.32.
Plan depicting the proposed sequence of building, c. 8th–11th century AD. Monastery, Terāhī.

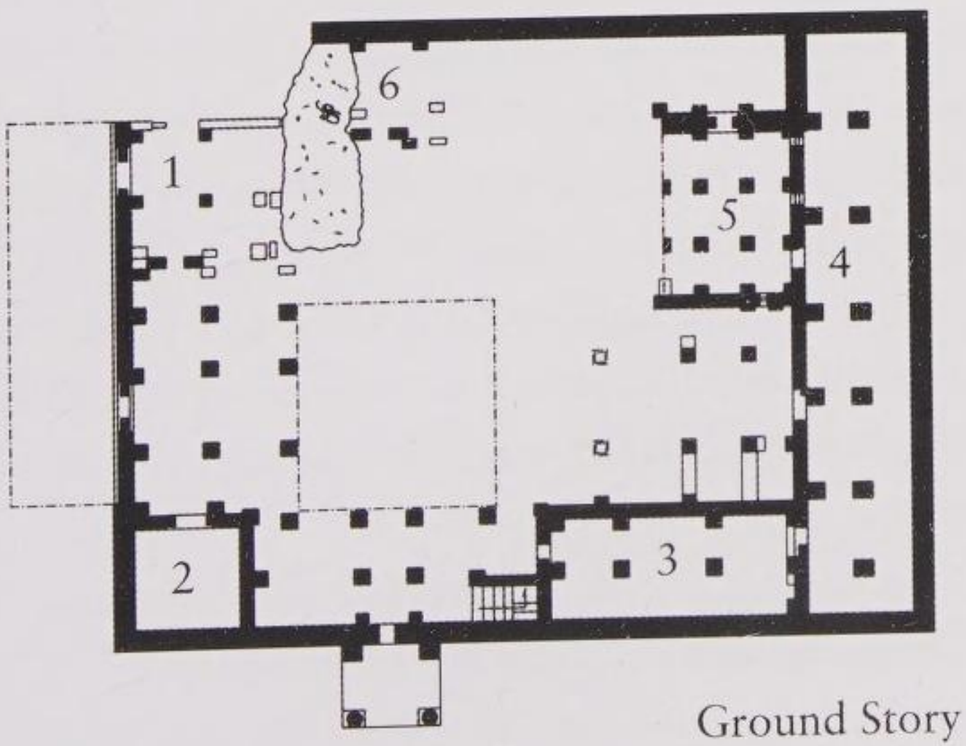




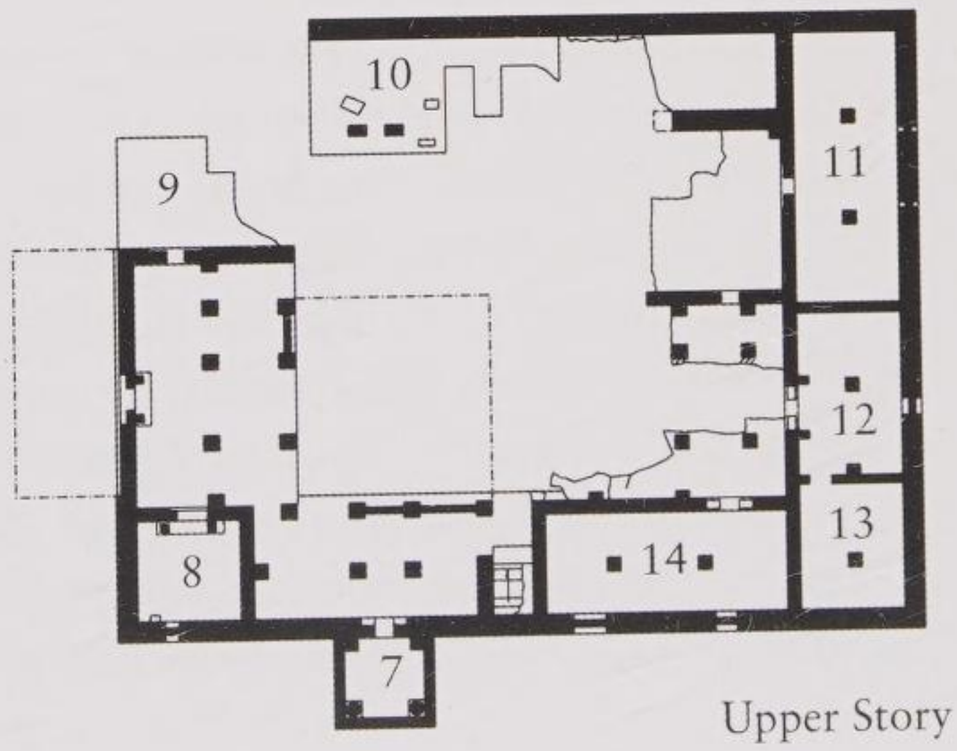
Fragments from the c. 8th-9th centuries



Hypothetical Form of the First Renovations



Ground Story



Upper Story

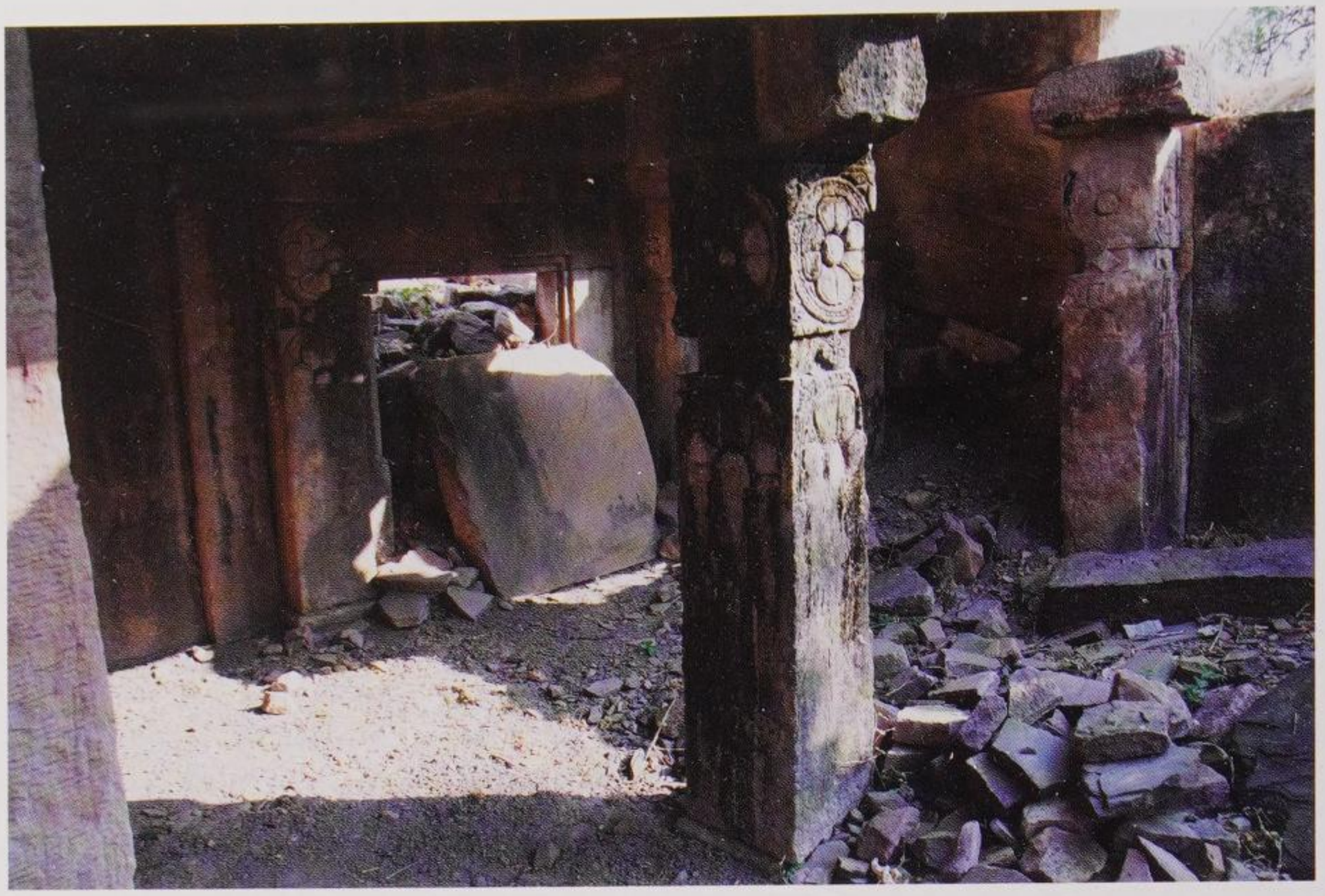


FIG. 4.33.
View of Room 1, c. 8th century AD. Seen from the northwest, lower story, monastery, Terāhī.

and unadorned type (Room 5) (see figs. 4.30, 4.34–4.35). Although it now stands open, it was once fully enclosed with a single entrance to the south, as seen in the remains of its original doorsill. The third unit consisted of the rooms around the building's periphery, particularly visible along the north and west wings (Rooms 2–4). And, finally, the fourth discrete unit included the hallways around the open court, which seem to have been arranged in an attempt to unify the internal spaces.

In addition to signaling different moments of construction through its system of structural support, the monastery provides other powerful clues to its relative chronology. The most significant is through the use of two distinct types of walls (fig. 4.35). The first type was built up of large blocks of local stone, laid in horizontal courses without the use of mortar. The second consisted of thin vertical slabs fitted carefully between pilasters (compare, for example, the different walls seen in fig. 4.34). At Terāhī, the use of these two types appears to signify both chronological and functional differences; whereas the first type was used primarily for walls along the exterior, the second type was found exclusively for use in the partitioning of interior spaces. In a few cases, "exterior"-type walls can be found in the interior of the present building, in effect highlighting portions that were originally freestanding buildings before later becoming subsumed through the enlargement of the building plan. The most obvious case can be seen in the outline of a rectangular building situated flush against the monastery's southern side (Room 6). Partially aligned with the monastery's main north–south axis, this may have been part of the older hermitage, which set an architectural frame of reference for later expansions at the site.

Looking carefully at such structural details has led me to propose the following sequence of building. In its earliest form, the monastery consisted of a few freestanding buildings (Rooms 1 and 5 on the plan), the first of which may

FIG. 4.34.
View of rooms to the west of the courtyard, c. 9th–11th century AD. Seen from the east, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.35.
View of Room 5, c. 9th–11th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Terāhī.

have stood as early as the eighth or ninth century, as evidenced not only by the style of its pillars but also by its construction on a separate structural unit (see figs. 4.32–4.34). At some point thereafter, a periphery wall (prākāra) was built around these earlier structures, enclosing them within a series of connecting halls, all of which were built on the same type of massive square pillar (see figs. 4.29, 4.30, 4.35). This new monastery was rectangular in form and dominated by an open-air courtyard, not entirely unlike Ranod. A third moment saw the creation of new internal spaces through the erection of new walls, many of which were set against the edges of earlier standing pillars (see figs. 4.32, 4.34). These were supported using a pillar with a more slender shaft set on a molded base, and they effectively moved inward to define a new central courtyard space. Some accommodation was made for light and ventilation through perforated patterns set into wall panels, but the interiors remained, nonetheless, dark and cavernous (fig. 4.36). An additional wing to the east, with foundations that unfortunately still remain buried deep underground, may have been either newly built or connected to the rest of the monastery as part of this same phase of construction (fig. 4.37).

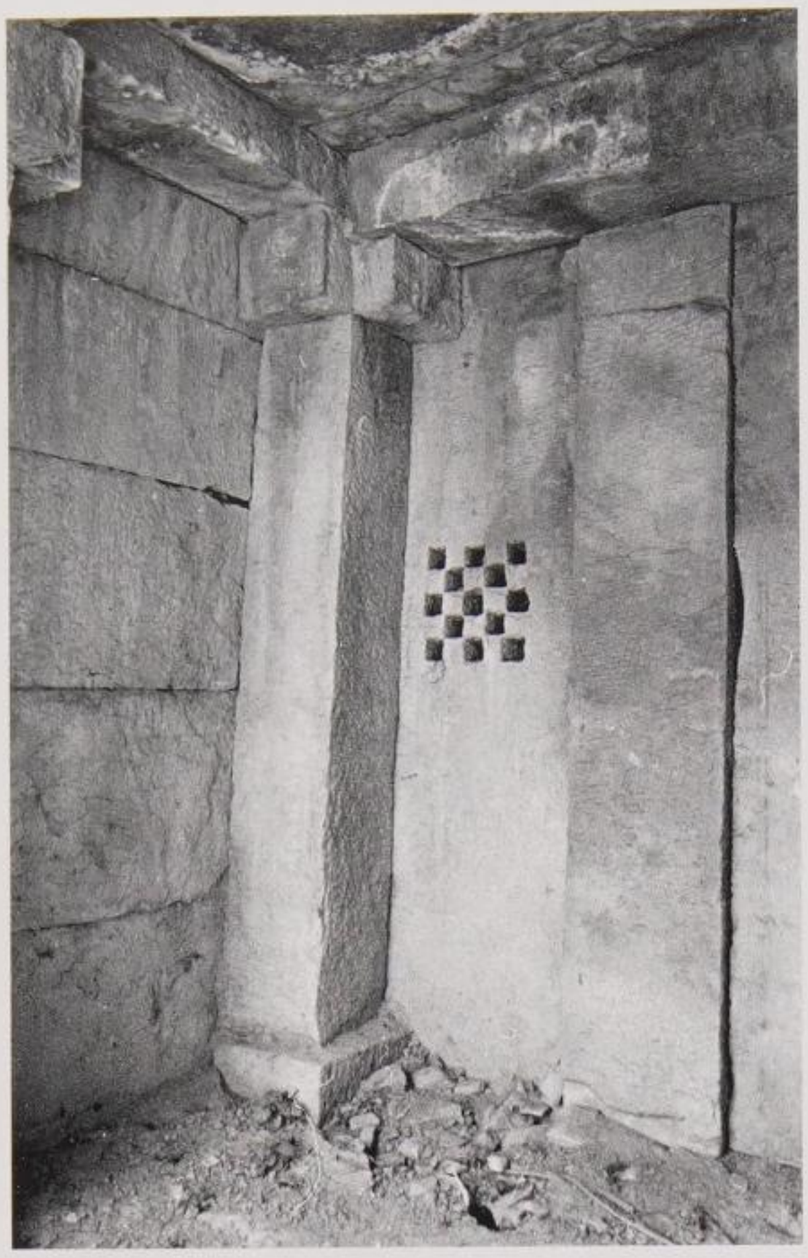


FIG. 4.36.
Perforated "windows" in the wall of Room 4, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, lower story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.37.
Overview of buried eastern wing, c. 9th–10th century AD. Seen from the northeast, monastic site, Terāhī.

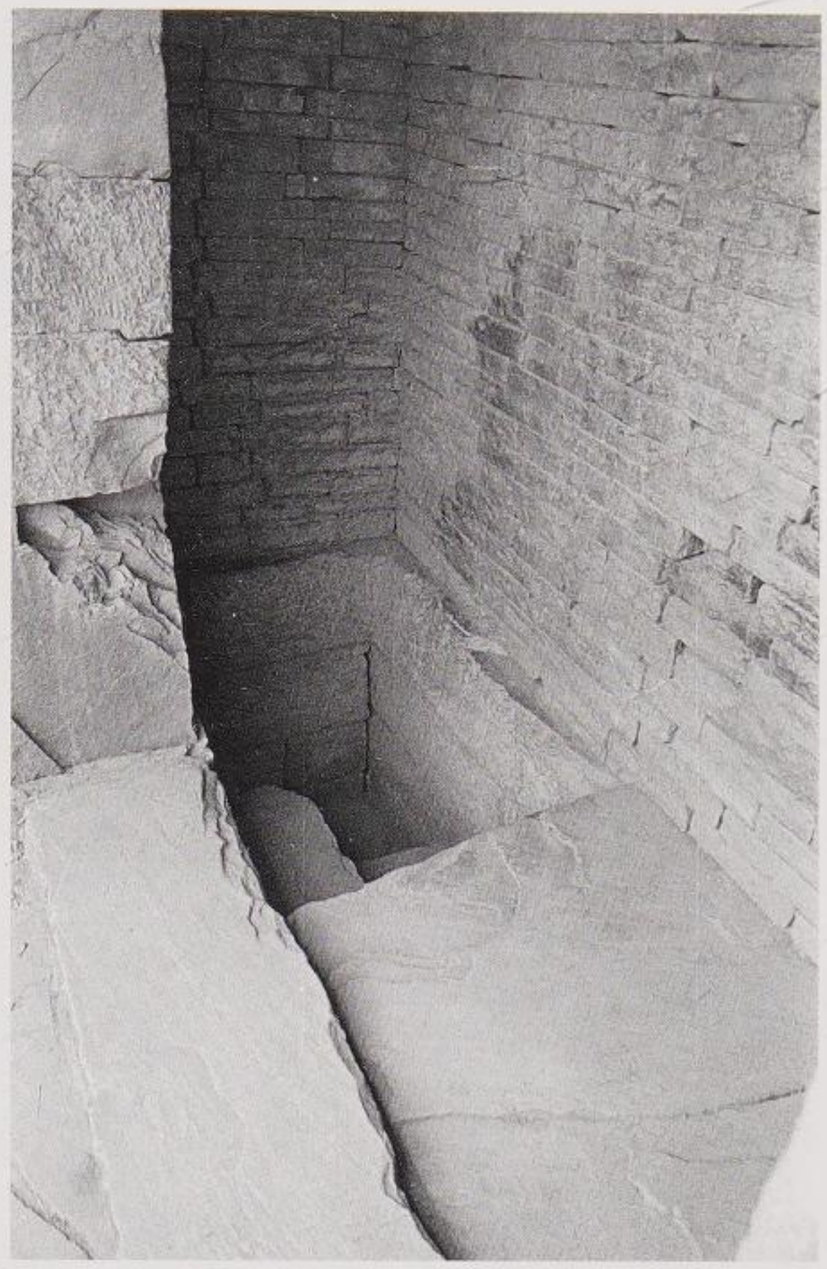
The monastery's upper story, by contrast, seems to represent a single, culminating act aimed at bringing cohesion to the site (see figs. 4.30, 4.32). As at Surwāyā, this moment can be dated to the late tenth or early eleventh century through a range of architectural details, including, most notably, the style of its pillars and ornamental features.[21] More likely than not, the addition of the upper story occurred at the same moment as the last phase of building in the rooms below. That the upper story was certainly not part of the original design can be established easily through the extremely cramped and awkward accommodation of the staircase, which was not only unusually narrow but also crudely established through a roughly hewn hole punched through a ceiling slab in the ground story (compare figs. 4.38, 4.39).

Despite this awkward entrance, the second story was remarkably well designed. Circulation was directed through open and airy halls encircling the central courtyard, which was once fully enclosed by half-walls, visible still sometimes in fragments. Each hall provided access to carefully arranged sets of rooms. The narrow landing from the staircase gave immediate access to the northern and western wings of the building. Of the two, the western wing was by far the most complex. It consisted of at least six, if not seven, interlocking rooms, grouped together around what may have been a sequence of inner halls (Rooms 11–14). The primary rooms were large in scale and seem to have been best fitted for use as dormitories or residential spaces (figs. 4.40, 4.41).

By contrast, the north and eastern wings seem to have formed the ritual heart of the upper story. The north wing was particularly pivotal to the monastery's reoriented plan, as it provided direct access to the projecting balcony overlooking the monastery's accompanying temple (fig. 4.42). The balcony at Terāhī, which

FIG. 4.38.
View of stairwell, c. 10th–11th century AD. Seen from the south, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.39.
View of stairwell and landing, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southeast, upper story, monastery, Kadwāhā.



likely represents a variation on the one that probably stood at Kadwāhā, still retains its original doorframe, which featured an image of Gaṇeśa at the center of its lintel (see fig. 4.59). While the deity's presence marked the balcony space as specially sanctified, the positioning of the space, not only above the monastery's main entrance but also on direct axis with the temple's portico (maṇḍapa), indicates an effort to engage the nearby temple. A sharp turn around a narrow corner led from the north to the east wing, where we still find a single room (Room 8) that, like its counterpart at Surwāyā (compare with Room 8 at Surwāyā), contains the remains of a raised basin and drain. The presence of a basin and a drain in nearly the same location within both monasteries suggests that the plan was responding to new ritual requirements, possibly involving the worship of a mobile icon.

Throughout the upper story, Terāhī's builders created privileged views and visual hierarchies articulated most clearly through the application of different types of pillars. Most notable was the use of ornate miśraka (mixed-type) pillars in prominent positions that would have been easily visible from below, such as directly around the open courtyard and its adjacent halls. These were characterized by successive square, octagonal, and round portions and topped by a capital that combined two distinct motifs—a diamond lotus encased in a niche flanked by a face-of-glory (kīrti-mukha) split into two halves (fig. 4.43). The pilasters were similarly well executed throughout the second floor; they employ a slender square shaft topped by an acanthus-like foliage pattern that, in fact, emulates the lower portion of an Indic vase-of-plenty motif (fig. 4.44).

Because of the monastery's poor state of repair, little more can be said about its general structure and form. We get some sense that, as at Surwāyā, the tenth-

FIG. 4.40.
Hall to the west of the courtyard, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the south, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.41.
View of Room 12, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southwest, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.42.
Hall to the north of the courtyard, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the west, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.43.
Pillar capital (detail), c. late 10th or 11th century AD. Upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.44.
Detail of a pilaster at the turn between the halls to the north and east of the courtyard, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southeast, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

and eleventh-century renovations were aimed at transforming a sequence of earlier buildings, possibly following the pattern of an open and airy hermitage, into a full-fledged and interiorized monastic institution. In the process, great efforts were made to reinforce the primacy of the building's main north–south and east–west axes by positioning the new entrance, through the portico to the north, in line with what may have been the entrance to an older part of the building (see fig. 4.32). Similarly, the makeshift creation of new doorways through the removal of wall panels, as noted previously, is consistent with an attempt to establish an east–west axis that connected the main entrances to the monastery's eastern and western wings (see fig. 4.34). As at Kadwāhā and Surwāyā, the staircase leading up was positioned directly to the west of the monastery's northern entrance and tucked away inconspicuously behind a set of pilasters. From this evidence alone, we begin to get some sense for the development of standard ideas concerning planning that extended across monastic sites.

Although the renovations most visibly affected the ordering of internal spaces, they were not merely focused on the monastery's interior. Rather, the new acts of building were aimed at establishing new spatial and ritual relationships with the site beyond the monastery's walls, and more specifically with the accompanying

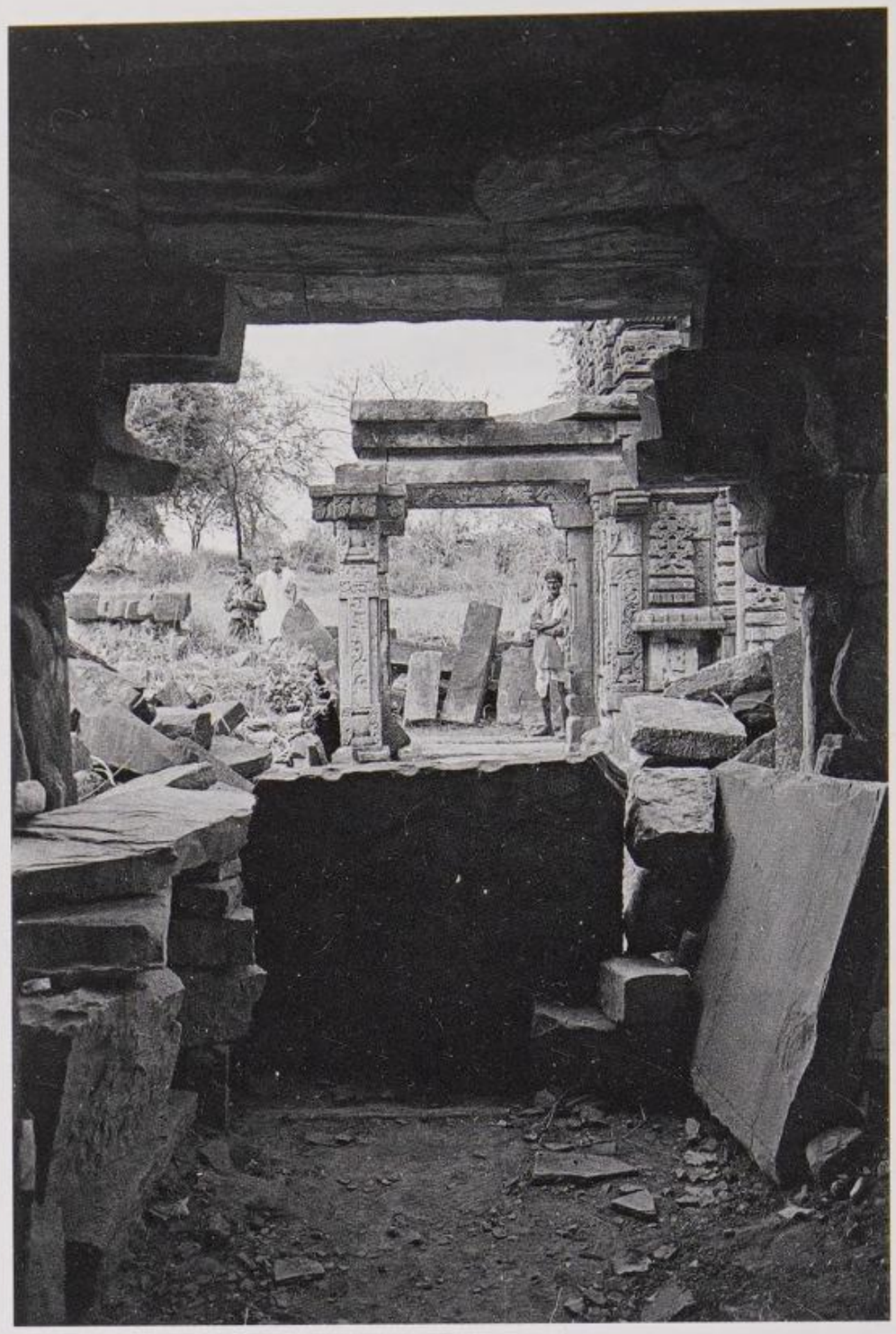


FIG. 4.45.
View through the temple portico toward the monastery, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the north, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.46.
View through the monastery's entrance toward the temple, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the south, Terāhī.

temple that was built in the ninth century. The north–south axis played a crucial role in linking the two monuments together. On the ground story, it created a clear avenue of approach through the temple portico (maṇḍapa). On the upper story, the new balcony above the monastery's entrance meaningfully stretched outward along the axis, engaging it through orientation and ornament and creating a point of permeability in the otherwise formidable walls of the newly expanded building (figs. 4.45, 4.46).

Expanding Exteriors: Temples, Tanks, and Other Peripherals

Although the renovations of the monasteries at Surwāyā and Terāhī took distinct forms, in many ways they also ran parallel courses in terms of both their chronology and their ultimate effects. In both cases, the transformation of the monastery from a smaller and earlier ascetic retreat into a larger monastic institution, primarily over the course of the tenth and early eleventh centuries, represented a reformulation of an internal program; it also represented a conscious engagement with an expanding site, which was manifested through the construction of new temples, tanks, and other religious structures. At Surwāyā, the tenth century saw the construction of three new temples and an underground step-well, in conjunction with building activities that quadrupled the size of the monastic dwelling itself (see figs. 4.1, 4.4). At Terāhī, the tenth- and early eleventh-

century additions to the monastery were aimed at increasing the dwelling size and at creating meaningful dialogues between the monastery and its accompanying temple, which was added to the site in the early ninth century AD (see figs. 4.2, 4.27). These alterations, made at the level of site rather than monument, simultaneously articulated and reformulated the relationship between the internal ascetic life within the monastery and the growing responsibilities of Śaiva priests to communities of lay devotees.

The expansions of the monasteries at both sites may have been connected with the increasing interest in the act of temple-worship expressed also through Śaiva Siddhānta texts around the turn of the first millennium, as mentioned earlier in this book. Unfortunately, the full extent to which textual sources necessarily represent the reality of actual practice remains unknown. The same is true for even the roles that members of the monastic communities at Surwāyā and Terāhī may have played in the performance of temple ritual.[22] Inscriptions from other sites provide some meager evidence. The guru Prabodhaśiva at Buḍhi Chanderī, for example, "(still) performed pūja (image worship), abhiṣeka (recitation), japa (recitation), restraint, and fire-ritual for the good of the world, rather than for (his own) benefit," even after he had achieved spiritual liberation through his practices as an ascetic.[23] More likely than not, the monastery's residents became the hub for housing and administering a wide range of ritual practitioners. In addition to the guru, or head spiritual teacher, these are categorized variously in Śaiva religious texts as ācārya (priest), *muni* (sage), vrātya (vow-taker), ṛṣi (sage), sthāpaka (priest specializing in consecration rites), and many others.[24]

Within textual sources, strict distinctions were made between householders who had received a basic initiation (samayadīkṣā) that simply marked entrance into the religious community as a lay devotee, and those who were initiated at higher levels that enabled them to perform rituals on behalf of others. Those who served as temple priests were referred to as ācāryas, a term that appears frequently in relationship to Mattamayūra gurus in their own inscriptions. The difference between householder and temple priest began from the moment of initiation. Householders were often simply given a general initiation (samayadīkṣā), which conferred upon them the authority to perform worship, or pūjā, for their own personal benefit. To perform pūjā at a temple, one had to receive a liberating initiation (nirvāṇadīkṣā), followed by a special consecration to become an ācārya, or priest, fully endowed with the power to officiate on behalf of others. Although, in theory, initiatory status was far more important than caste in determining qualifications for participation, by the tenth and eleventh centuries it is clear that Śaiva brāhmaṇas were favored for priestly initiations in both South India and Kaśmīr.[25]

Hierarchies within Śaiva Siddhānta communities were far more nuanced than a simple dichotomy between temple priest and lay devotee. This was particularly true in later textual sources, in which ācāryas eventually became urban householders and were carefully distinguished from other types of religious practitioners, such as celibate wandering holy men (*saṃnyāsīs*) and other kinds of householding sages who married, but lived with their wives outside of the city and deep in the forest. These same sources make it clear that, by the later medieval

period, caste had become a core issue; only members of one of the five clans of Śaiva brāhmaṇas could actually rise to the level of ācārya. These Śaiva brāhmaṇas were carefully distinguished from "ordinary" brāhmaṇas, who could achieve a fairly high ritual status; however, the highest position of all had become linked to the auspicious of birth. This shift is not entirely surprising, as it effectively ensured a hereditary passage of all rights to collect revenue in exchange for ritual services, which had become akin to a family livelihood. Despite the careful delineations regarding the status of priests, even the highest of initiations, the liberating initiation (nirvāṇadīkṣā), remained available to members of any caste.[26]

Although the lay householders who had received an ordinary initiation (samayadīkṣā) were not qualified to perform pūjā on behalf of others at a temple, they were nonetheless fully equipped to fruitfully perform the obligatory daily rites (*nityapūjā*) on behalf of themselves. While texts stipulate that the worshipper should be male, they make it clear that the worshipper could be of any of the four castes and even from an "untouchable," or outcaste, family. Women, children, and others could still participate through the mediation of a qualified male, likely a member of their immediate family. As in the case of the monastic ritual of the renunciate, liberation-seeking sages, the nityapūjā began with inward rituals of purification, including, most importantly, ritual bathing (ātmaśuddi), the imposition of powerful mantras onto the body, and other key bodily actions. The key difference between ascetics and householders was in the ordering of the mantras that were superimposed on to the body, which also altered the meaning attached to the ritual act. Whereas the liberation-seeking ascetic followed the inward path of cosmic reabsorption, or the path that would move toward and emulate the god Śiva in his purest and undifferentiated form, the householder followed the outward path of cosmic emission, or the differentiation of Śiva that brought about the material world. In this way, in the very form of daily ritual action, the ascetic and householder formed a dynamic pair, mirroring one another.[27]

The interest in temple building was articulated most clearly at Surwāyā, where the expansion of the sacred arena beyond the monastery's walls was felt through the establishment of at least three new shrines to the north of the monastic dwelling (see figs. 4.1, 4.47, 4.48). Likely built within decades of one another in the tenth century, each contained an icon of a Śiva-liṅga, representing the deity in his most abstract yet potent visible form. Shaped like a phallus and seated in a pedestal often representing a yoni (female reproductive organ), the liṅga signified Śiva's creative energy as supreme lord, the ultimate source of cosmic origination.[28] The primary temple attached to the monastery was by far the largest at the site. It faced west and stood just to the east of the portico marking the monastery's main entrance. Temples 2 and 3 were situated at the opposite end of the complex, at a distance of approximately 50 feet (15 meters). They faced eastward toward the main temple and likely acted in a secondary capacity as accompanying shrines. Unfortunately, all three surviving temples have lost the tall superstructures that would have once highlighted their presence at the site.[29]

In addition to these three temples, Surwāyā played host to a number of additional shrines, indicated through the remains of at least two temple door lintels

FIG. 4.47.
View of the monastery, stepped well, and Temple 1, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the west, Surwāyā. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 4.48.
View of Temples 1, 2, and 3 from the upper courtyard of the monastery, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the southeast, Surwāyā.

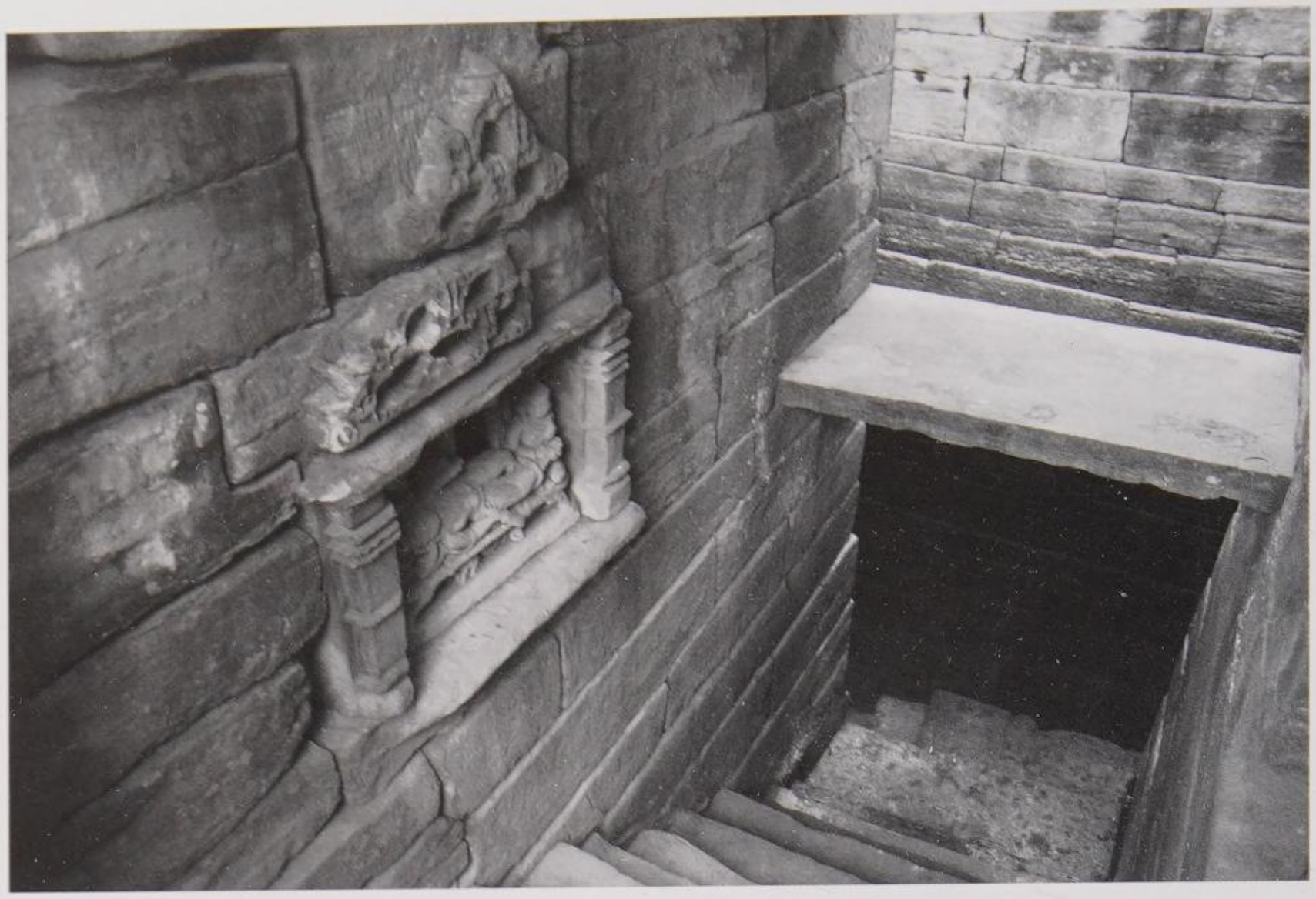


FIG. 4.49.
View of stepped well, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the southeast, Surwāyā.

and dozens of architectural fragments dating to the tenth or early eleventh centuries. At least one of the temples, Temple 2, was planned according to a *pañcāyatana* (five-shrined) plan; three of the four smaller, subsidiary shrines built at its corners can still be traced through their foundation markings at the site. Finally, an underground well, accessed via a long and narrow stairway, was established just to the north of Temples 2 and 3. Two niches, beautifully framed and surmounted by pediments (*udgama*), flanked the steps leading down. Although the niche on the east is currently empty, the one on the left still contains a tenth-century figure of Viṣṇu sleeping on the cosmic serpent, accompanied by the nine planets (*navagrahas*), who appear on a panel directly above the dreaming god (fig. 4.49).[30]

At Terāhī, only one modest temple, datable to the ninth century, still stands just to the north beyond the monastery's walls (see figs. 4.2, 4.28).[31] As at Surwāyā, it was dedicated to Śiva in the form of a liṅga and faced west. Although no other building remains standing immediately in situ, the monastery's purview likely continued to the west, in the direction of the Madhumatī River. Still visible today is a beaten path leading downward toward the banks of the nearby river, as well as traces of what may have once been *ghats* (steps) and a water catchment or well, half-buried in a drop in the landscape. The monastery site may have been selected specifically because of its proximity to the river, with which the monastery likely retained a dynamic relationship (see figs. 1.2, 4.27).

At both Terāhī and Surwāyā, the foundation of new temples created an alternative arena for ritual, centered on icons of the god Śiva in the form of large, stone immovable liṅgas. Within the monasteries themselves, ritual likely centered on smaller personal shrines and movable icons and liṅgas installed and consecrated for individualized daily ritual. The fixing of icons within temples standing outside the monastery's walls, by contrast, implies the establishment of a regular schedule

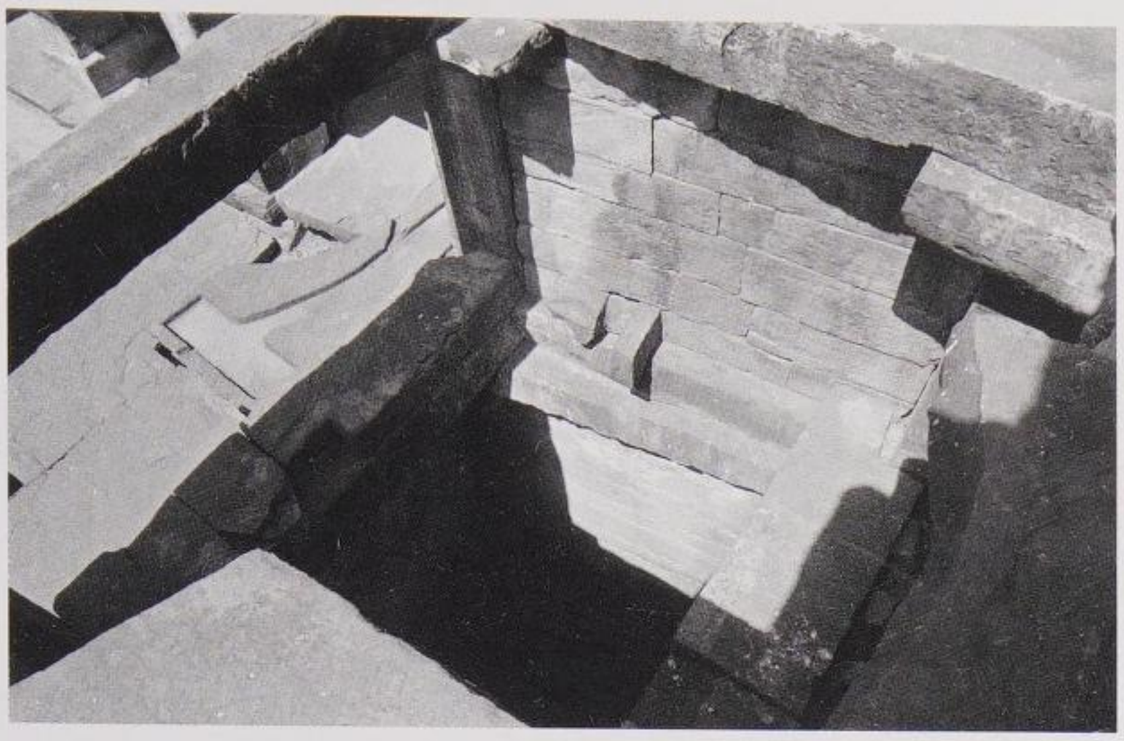


FIG. 4.50.
Water tank or well within the monastery, c. 9th or 10th century AD. Seen from the southeast and above, lower story, monastery, Surwāyā.

of public worship, performed for a great range of participants.[32] These may have included local householders, local lords, and other lay members of the growing Śaiva community. The new tanks and river ghats, in turn, were fully integrated with the changing architectural and ritual environment around the monastery. This much is particularly clear at Surwāyā, where the monastery and temple complex were each endowed with their own water source, with the monastery's simple well presenting a striking contrast to the elaborately adorned stepped tank (fig. 4.50). Whereas the former likely accommodated ritual life within the monastery, the latter was better situated to support the performance of rituals at Surwāyā's temples.

Although the addition of tanks and temples certainly broadened the scope of their monastic sites, we should assume that they still represent just a vestige of a larger built environment that is no longer visible today. The precise scope of building may have varied from site to site, but even the smallest of hermitages were accompanied, at the very least, by one or more temples and either a well or a tank that could provide water for sacred bathing and pūjā (image worship). Larger monastic centers may have grown into extensive complexes that offered a wide range of social services, including facilities that functioned as hospitals, schools, colleges, maternity wards, and other charitable foundations; others still may have sponsored dramatic performances, medical services, and the distribution of goods and food.[33] While such extensive activity is no longer traceable at Surwāyā, Terāhī, or any other surviving Mattamayūra site, it is possible that the additional structures that may have facilitated such functions have been lost over time.

The notion of such expanding complexes is mirrored particularly well in Śaiva Siddhānta ritual texts, particularly in chapters on pratiṣṭhā, or the establishment and consecration of temples and icons. In the *Somaśambhu-paddhati,* for example, the consecration of the monastery is treated toward the end of the section on rites of consecration. The section as a whole contains fourteen chapters, the first ten of which are dedicated primarily to the temple, including the laying down of the first stone, the installation of the sacred pot at the heart of the sanctum, the establishment and extraction of various icons and images, the materials that should be used in the creation of a liṅga, and the installation of the crest and mast of banners that adorned the site. After treating the entirety of the temple, the text turns to the consecration of the monastery, and then to the rituals pertaining to other accompanying structures, including the basin or stepped tank (*puṣkariṇī*), the well (*kūpa*), and, finally, a sacred tree.[34]

The distinctions between different types of water architecture, including stepped tanks and smaller wells, fits well within both inscriptional sources and the range of built structures found at Mattamayūra sites. Inscriptions, in particular, describe the establishment of artificial ponds or lakes (*taḍāga*), elaborate stepped tanks (vāpī), and simple wells (kūpa). At Chandrehe, the sage Prabodhaśiva built

both a "sea-like lake" and a well, in addition to building a new monastery, in the process of expanding the scope of his predecessor's āśrama.[35] At Ranod, the interweaving of temples with tanks was captured beautifully in verses praising the addition of Vyomaśiva's step-well, which was poetically evoked as attracting lay devotion. The banks of the step-well stood adorned by "a garland of temples," which shone "with the brightness of nectar, as if it were moonlight [taking on the form] of dwellings of the gods," and the water of the tank became a site filled with the sweet jingling sounds of the anklets worn by "town-women come intent on expressing their devotion (*bhakti*) to Parvati."[36] The use of multiple terms for water architecture in Mattamayūra inscriptions resonates with a similar range described in other sources. The term "vāpī," for example, can sometimes be taken, as Jutta Jain-Neubauer has noted, as a step-well, or "an elaborate well-construction with flights of steps," to be distinguished from kūpas (ordinary wells), *kuṇḍas* (small ponds), or taḍāgas (big ponds or lake).[37] However, it is also possible, and indeed likely, that some terms were used interchangeably—such as "vāpī" and "kuṇḍa," to indicate a step-well—and may have been selected for reasons of meter and verse. Others, such as the kūpa, or ordinary well, seem to have been clearly distinguished as a different scale of production.[38]

Similarly, the references to flag masts and the sacred tree evoke both the tangible and intangible activities at the site. The flag masts remind us that both temple and monastery were once animated by the fluttering of banners that were changed periodically and raised daily, creating fluctuations and movements that animated the site.[39] The prescription pertaining to sacred trees may more permanently resonate with the presence of fairly old trees standing in close proximity to the surviving monasteries and temples (see figs. 4.27, 4.28). Despite their sanctity, such trees likely caused some problems in the maintenance of buildings; at Ranod, the inscription contains an injunction that, in contradiction to ritual manuals, boldly threatens an eternity in hell to "that ascetic [*vrātya*] who would plant a tree near this stepped well [vāpī], will (commit a crime equivalent) to the five worst or fatal sins [*pañca-pataka*], and will surely go to hell, from which there is no return."[40] While this may sound extreme, it seems to be also practical: if one were to plant a tree next to a step-well, it seems just a matter of time before the roots would unsettle the stones. That such injunctions often remained unheeded may be hinted at through modern-day archaeological reports, which are replete with laments of the damage done to buildings by overgrowth of nearby, and possibly sacred, trees.[41]

Finally, among the sections in ritual manuals dealing with tanks and wells are often prescriptions pertaining to the construction of a pit for the performance of fire sacrifice, a practice going back to earlier brāhmaṇical traditions as recorded originally through the Vedas. Although in many Śaiva ascetic traditions, the external fire of the brāhmaṇical altar could be internally subsumed through the practice of yoga, it is clear that the external performance continued to function as an important part of ritual life. Because the fire sacrifice was often undertaken through the creation of an impermanent altar made of brick, it did not necessarily require a fixed location. However, even today, one finds the location of the fire pit

made permanent through the creation of a stone or concrete pit, usually in front of a temple, often directly on axis or just slightly off to one side. At a site such as Surwāyā, an ideal location may have been the area currently housing traces of an earlier platform now heaped with architectural fragments; it is positioned at what might be considered a zone of ritual action, at the intersection of the north–south axis leading directly out of the monastery and the east–west axis leading into the temple sanctum (see figs. 4.1, 4.4, 4.47).

In addition to the temples, tanks, and fire pits, both sites may have also been adorned by cultivated gardens and groves. Not only do inscriptions record the establishment of gardens by sages at other Mattamayūra sites, but gardens often accompanied sacred buildings in other literary sources. At Ranod, the sage Vyomaśiva's step-well was aptly endowed "with pure temples and with gardens."[42] Similarly, his successor, Patangaśiva, established orchards or gardens to accompany his other additions to his place of residence, which included a temple, a well (kūpa), and five additional tanks (taḍāga).[43] Because of their ephemeral nature, gardens remain among the most difficult aspects of early architecture to trace in the landscape today.[44] Nonetheless, textual sources make it clear that gardens formed a standard component of both courtly and monastic worlds.

In courtly contexts, gardens (*ārāma*) and groves were sites of worldly and sensual pleasure, populated sometimes by lovers and courtesans and other times by hermits and saints, all of whom could find secluded respite in the shade of pavilions and well-placed trees. As Daud Ali has shown, the early Indian garden was a highly cultivated place that had developed a kind of institutional status within elite households and palaces. Gardens came in different forms: in addition to those attached to courtly and elite dwellings, gardens occupied important spaces within cities and their suburbs as well as religious complexes. In the most privileged of circumstances, they were elaborately constructed and intricately planned spaces, surrounded by walls with multiple enclosures and fitted with step-wells, tanks, and watercourses that created pleasurable, and even spectacular, environments. But gardens of sacred trees and flowers also seem to have been ubiquitous. Architectural treatises, such as the *Samarāṅgaṇasutradhāra* and *Aparājitapṛcchā*, prescribe their placement at regular intervals throughout any village, town, or city, including around the fortifying moats and walls. Gardens were populated by a wide array of animals, described also in relationship to the rustic natural landscape, that were also carefully cultivated for their ornamental and entertainment value. In addition to the ubiquitous preening peacocks were quails and rams, the latter of which were often pitted against each other for sport. Finally, beyond the city walls were the pleasure groves, filled with stone seats, pavilions, and artificial hills and pleasure pools. While some were reserved for royalty and other courtly elites, many were open to the public, who came not only for personal repose but also to participate in larger community celebrations and religious festivals.[45]

It was the permeability between the inner and outer realms of the city that formed one point of connection between the courtly and ascetic worlds; another was rooted in a shared literary aesthetics. As characters within Sanskrit poetry and drama, lovers and sages formed two extremely common tropes employed in

the service of a carefully articulated aesthetics, known as *rasa* (literally, "flavor"), which was aimed at evoking intense emotional and physical responses from contemporary elite audiences. When lovers populated gardens, the setting was usually springtime, where the blossoming of flowers might complement the "swelling and ripening of happy lovers," whose desire was also evoked through descriptions of upraised flesh, bristling bodily hair, and widening eyes.[46] In courtly literature, the ascetic effected a similar response but through an inverse correlation; it was the ascetic's desiccated frame that evoked the notion of "love-sickness" or absence of emotion. Within religious texts, the aesthetics of the garden worked in the service of spiritual attainment. In Buddhist monastic contexts, the garden became a place of spiritual bliss and enlightenment. In Saiva contexts, the grove was particularly associated with meditation, as the site where Śiva himself engaged in unbroken contemplation, embodying a rasa of "tranquility" (*śānta rasa*), or a state of complete mastery over his senses.[47] The idea of the ascetic as a tranquil figure, unaffected by outward temptations, is particularly prevalent in the mythology associated with Śiva's conquest of the god of love, Kāmadeva, that was evoked many times in Mattamayūra inscriptions. At the end of at least one version of the story, after reducing Kāmadeva to ashes, Śiva resurrects him in a formless state and declares that Kāmadeva would continue accompanying him as his perpetual attendant (gaṇa).[48]

Conceptually, such descriptions evoke a world still imaginable today at Terāhī and Surwāyā: an almost heavenly place of tranquility and repose, populated by sages who were nonetheless connected to courtly culture and urban society. But they also remind us that the expanding world of the monastery included the construction of new temples, which, as Phyllis Granoff has shown, can themselves be read as visual evocations of heavenly palaces, gardens, and cities engaged in pleasurable activities as described in the *Purāṇas*.[49] The negotiation between the erotic and the ascetic was inextricably interwoven through the verses of Mattamayūra inscriptions. At Ranod, for example, the steps leading down to the tank, added by the guru Vyomaśiva, were likened to the sensuous folds of a woman's belly, even as the tank itself was described as a place of spiritual attainment. At the same time, the monastery itself remained an abode of asceticism and a "supreme place of spiritual bliss," appropriate for the performance of austerities by ascetics intent on realizing god.[50] It is probably not insignificant then that the upper lintel of the sanctum of Terāhī's temple features a pair of mendicant ascetics, each holding a staff and water pot, at its upper corners, as a reminder that the temple was associated with a lineage that drew its power through the status of its wilderness ascetics (figs. 4.51, 4.52). Similarly, the perennial installation of a liṅga as the primary temple icon at Mattamayūra sites significantly resonated with the habits of other Śaiva ascetic groups, and notably the Pāśupatas, who, like the Mattamayūras, traced their beginnings to the Dāruvana (Pine Forest), where the practice of liṅga worship was born, as described earlier in Chapter 2 (figs. 4.53, 4.54).[51]

In this sense, the transformation of the monastery at Surwāyā and Terāhī—from a semipermeable set of buildings into a fully enclosed and interiorized space—may have resonated with such literary maneuvers. The monastic dwelling

FIG. 4.51.
View of the sanctum doorway, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the east, Śiva temple, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.52.
Upper corner of the lintel of the sanctum doorway (detail), c. 9th century AD. Seen from the east, Śiva temple, Terāhī.

may have served as an analogy for the interiorized ritual world of Śaiva sages, who, like the god Śiva in the garden of Kāmadeva, the god of love, remained firm in their practice of meditation and yoga, even in an environment surrounded by sensory temptations. At the same time, the realm of the temple became like the heavens filled with pleasure pavilions and lovely landscapes described in religious texts, and the resident sages took on new roles as servants to the enshrined gods. Just as the sacred complex expanded around the monastery, filling with the sounds, smells, and tastes of a heavenly ritual world, the architecture of the monastery created more clearly distinguishable boundaries between monastic and lay activities, and ultimately expressed the interiority of its ascetic community in a more externally visible way.

Dynamics of Devotion and Reorientations in Architectural Space

Even today, the temples at Surwāyā and Terāhī form a striking contrast to the austerity of the monasteries' exterior walls, drawing the eye through their sculpted surfaces and their soaring height. The sheer visual accessibility of the temples fittingly drew attention to the enshrined icon, which functioned not merely as a representation of a deity, but also as a fully embodied living presence. As a result, the encounter with the enshrined stone icon was a powerful devotional and aesthetic experience. On a deeply sensory level, it had the effect of stimulating a deep personal and emotional identification between the worshipper and the

FIG. 4.53.
Entrance to the sanctum of Temple 1, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, Surwāyā.

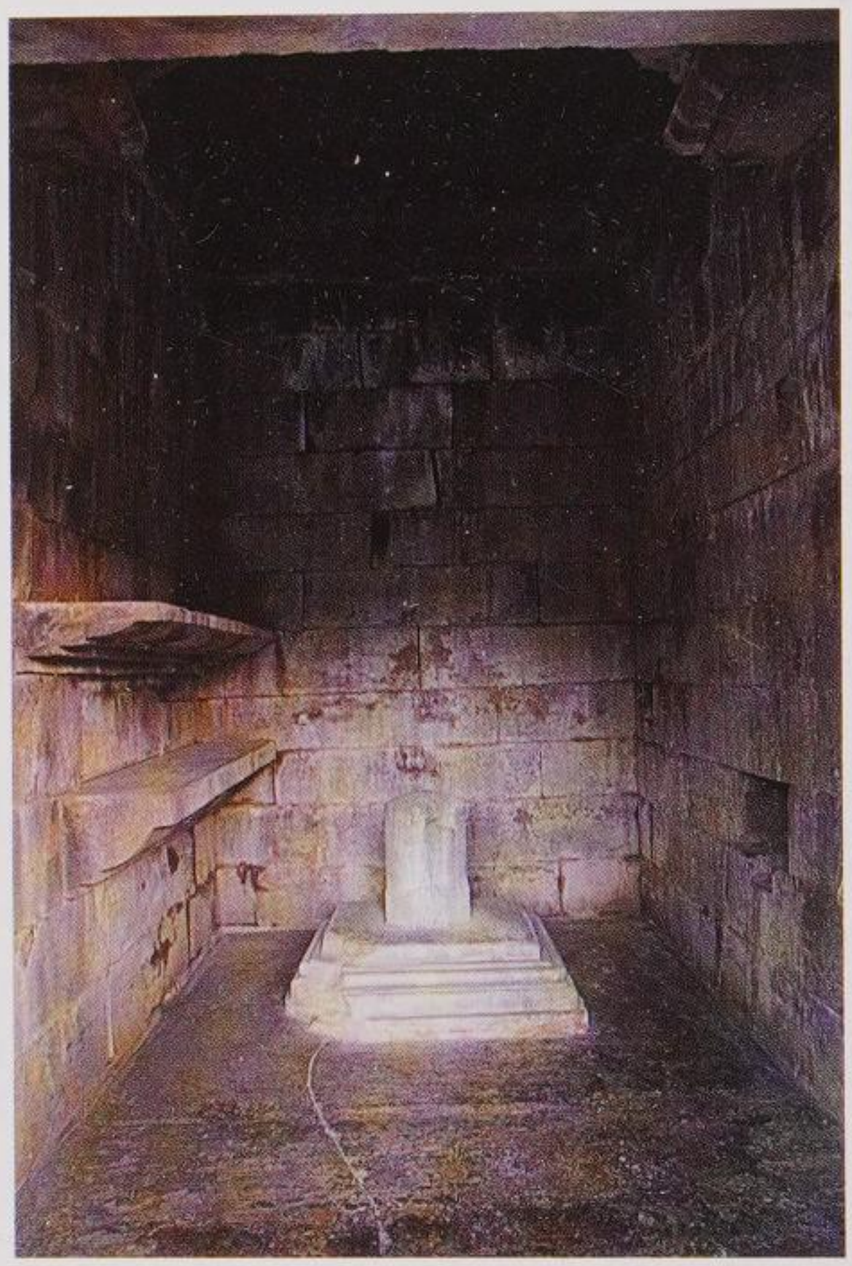


FIG. 4.54.
View of enshrined liṅga in the sanctum, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the west, Temple 1, Surwāyā.

enshrined god. The central act of identification was the act of darśana, or the exchange of glances with the enshrined deity. Vision was the primary trigger in the process of experiencing closeness to god, but the vision itself was not a static act of observation, but rather a deeply felt immersion within a deeply synesthetic and kinesthetic world.[52]

Since it is likely that lay worshippers often took darśana during the course of ritual action undertaken by temple priests, the act of "seeing" a deity in a sanctum was also the act of witnessing a performed ritual event. Icons were attended to in a consistent and systematic regimen of ritual that involved elaborate bathing, the offering of sacred substances, and the dressing of the resident deity. Thus even if a lay worshipper was not endowed with a level of initiation that gave him the ability to perform ritual on behalf of others within a temple context, coming to a temple

was still a deeply participatory act. The temple, as a result, also became a key location where worshippers encountered the god Śiva, and where the relationship between monastic and lay devotional communities—including those that were royal—was subject to active negotiation. At the same time, it was at the temple that members of the resident monastic community could also visibly articulate and actively perform their privileged relationship with Śiva.[53]

At Surwāyā and Terāhī, the close relationships between the monastery and its accompanying temples were articulated through a combination of spatial orientation, iconographic markers, and sight lines. The importance of orientation can be traced through unwavering consistencies across monastic sites. At both Terāhī and Surwāyā, for example, we find that the monasteries face northward and sit just to the south of a west-facing Śiva temple. To these two we may add also the monasteries at Kadwāhā and Ranod, both of which, like Terāhī and Surwāyā, exhibited a northward orientation, situating the monastery to the south of its accompanying temples. This basic orientation became standard practice and is seen without exception at every single surviving Śaiva monastic site. By the middle of the twelfth century, it also became codified through prescriptions in architectural treatises.[54]

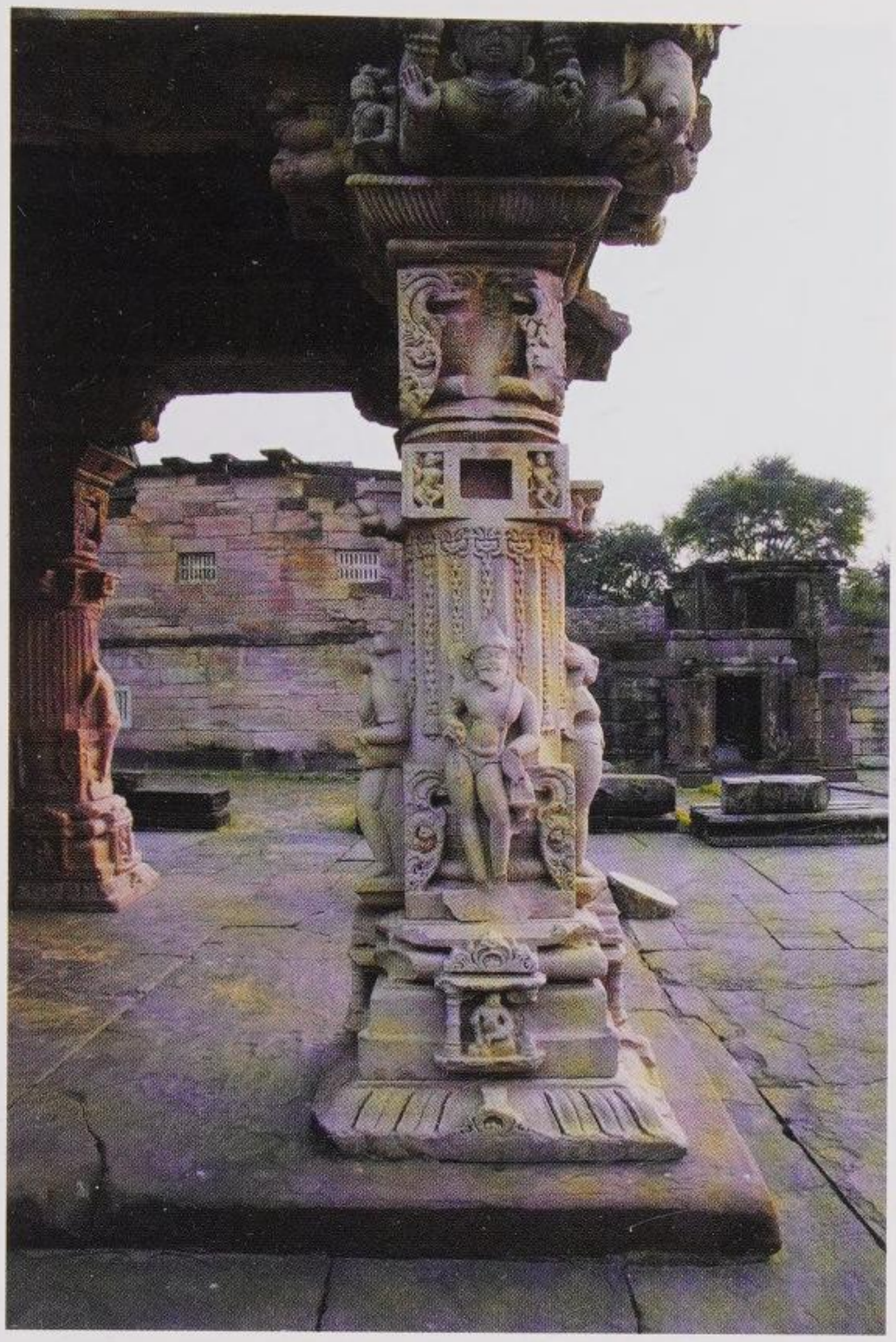
While this spatial orientation is not precisely stipulated in any text, it resonates with textual descriptions of the relationship between guru and disciple. According to a wide range of sources, as has been noted by Hans Bakker, a pupil should always approach his guru from the guru's south side during the performance of important rituals, such as the conferral of initiation. For example, the *Svacchandratantra* describes the common initiation (samayadīkṣā) as follows: "After he has performed the (preliminary) rites, he [the guru], rejoiced at heart, makes the pupil, whose eyes are full of joy, stand up and, taking him by his hand, leads him towards the 'southern *mūrti*' (icon): Having made a circle there into a seat (consisting) of the syllable *om* with the help of a flower, he places the pupil upon it, his body erect, his face turned to the north. After the guru has installed himself whilst facing east, he performs the sprinkling and subsequent rites."[55] This is not an anomalous occurrence; the *Mṛgendrāgama* similarly indicates that during the preparatory rites preceding the act of initiation, the guru should sit on a throne facing east, while the disciple should stand facing north and hold his hands in the añjali mudra, or gesture of worship.[56] It may have been the case that at monastic sites, the icon of Śiva stood in perpetually as supreme guru, upon his rightful support or throne enshrined within the temple, while the aspirants inhabiting the monastery enacted their relative role of disciples seated to Śiva's south side. The movement from the monastery to the temple would have then followed an appropriate circumambulatory path, moving clockwise toward the temple, first from the south, and then continuing from the east. It may also be significant that, in early textual sources, the northeast side, or the side upon which the temple would have stood in relationship to the monastery, was sometimes also understood as being the location of the door to heaven.[57]

Textual sources may also provide indirect clues to understanding the west-facing orientation of temples at Mattamayūra sites. Despite common preconceptions that Śiva temples should face east, west-facing liṅga temples were

fairly common in early medieval central India. Often when they encounter temples, scholars assume that the fact a temple faces west indicates an esoteric affiliation. Whereas the east was often associated with the supremacy of the gods in the daylight, the western direction was associated with the reign of demons in the darkness of night.[58] However, Śaiva Siddhānta texts explicitly prescribe that a liṅga should face west, likely to accommodate the direction of ritual action. For example, the *Kāmikāgama* dictates not only that a temple containing a liṅga should face west, but also that a temple priest should face east, in the direction of the sanctum, while performing the preparatory rituals to the guardians of the doorframe. In the event that the temple door faces west, the text indicates that, for the purpose of the ritual, the direction of the door should be imagined as east nonetheless. Only once the worship is complete should the priest enter into the temple proper. In this sense, the temple's orientation was determined not necessarily by parameters fixed in real space, but rather by its positioning relative to the actions and movements of the ritual practitioner.[59]

In this sense, the physical form of the temple indexes the ephemeral ritual actions once performed by living priests. This is particularly true at Surwāyā, where ritual action was also made visibly present through the presence of a unique set of sculpted ascetic figures addorsed to the pillars of the portico (maṇḍapa) of the main temple, standing just beyond the monastery's walls. Prominently rendered at approximately half- to three-quarters life-size, these have the effect of representing the actions of the practitioner in the frame of the temple. All of the sculpted figures are garbed similarly in a loincloth and sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*), and they all stand on a simple pedestal that is flush against the bottom of the pillar's vase-of-plenty (pūrṇaghaṭa) base. While at first they appear generic, in fact they exhibit a significant degree of variation in form and iconography. Broadly, they break down into two distinct types, distributed evenly across the maṇḍapa's pillars. The first is a lean, bearded ascetic who sports tall, matted dreadlocks (*jaṭāmukuṭa*) and holds objects associable with Śaiva wandering sages, including a pot, bowl, palm-leaf manuscript, and severed head (fig. 4.55). The second, by contrast, is slightly fleshier and better kempt: his hair is more carefully coiffed, and he is clean-shaven (fig. 4.56). Instead of an iconography of world renunciation, he holds objects of prayer (rosaries and pouches), wears large and visible earrings, and raises his right hand in the gesture of benediction (*abhaya mudra*). In short, he seems to represent the sage not as a forest ascetic but as a temple priest.

Although it is possible that these sculpted sages may represent a specific iconographic set, and even possibly a set of "portraits" of past teachers, there are ways in which they more compellingly configure the relationship between the monastery and the temple.[60] The key to deciphering their meaning is conveyed through the positioning of each of the two figural types. The sculpted figures that closely resembled forest sages appeared exclusively on the north and south sides of their respective pillars, or in other words, directly on axis with the monastery. By contrast, those that took on the appearance of the worldly temple priest were positioned on the pillars' east and west faces, notably following the direction of passage into the temple. The movements along each axis, toward monastery and toward temple, were captured



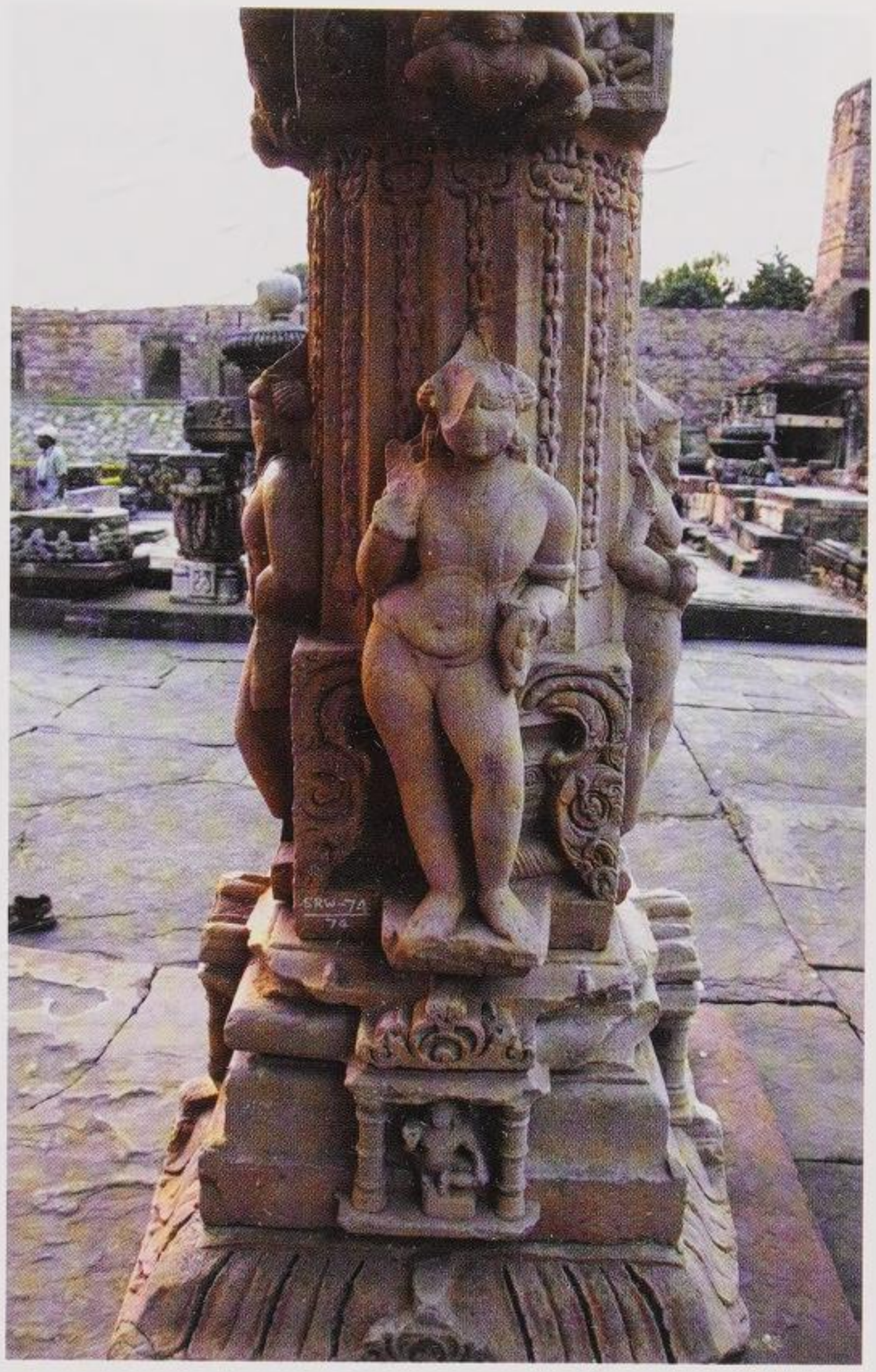


FIG. 4.55.
View of the northwest pillar of the temple maṇḍapa, with an addorsed figure of an ascetic, facing north and holding a rosary and water pot, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, Temple 1, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.56.
View of a figure of a priest or ascetic, facing east and holding a pouch and rosary, addorsed to the northwest pillar of the temple maṇḍapa, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, Temple 1, Surwāyā.

FIG. 4.57.
View of a figure of a guru, facing east, addorsed to the southeast pillar of the temple maṇḍapa, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, Temple 1, Surwāyā.

dynamically through the figures' bodily movement. Swaying inward in a three-bends posture (*tribaṅga*), the sculpted sages along each axis were not static, but rather caught in perpetual motion that effectively drew visual attention in the relevant direction. The only exception to this rule was a single stately figure, specially marked by a thick sash extending across his round yogic belly, which may have represented the guru and primary practitioner at the head of both communities (fig. 4.57). Positioned on the northeast pillar, he stood in a rigidly frontal position facing east toward the liṅga, in the spot that was notably closest to both monastery and temple.

The almost lifelike swaying of these addorsed ascetics was also mirrored in the figural sculpture adorning the temple's doorframe, which similarly bent inward,

toward the sanctum's entrance and its enshrined liṅga. In addition to the standard sets of door guardians and divine couples along the door jambs and the trinity of divinities on the lower lintel, there was an overhanging upper lintel depicting, in a niche at the center, the god Śiva in his powerful form as Naṭeśa, or lord of the dance. The form of Śiva as cosmic dancer was particularly powerful, because it signified the cyclical process of cosmic creation and dissolution—or, in other words, the birth, death, and rebirth of the cosmos—enacted through Śiva's movements. Inscriptions and religious texts often link Śiva's dance to the Hindu notion of saṃsāra, or the cyclical process of birth (that is, creation), death (that is, reabsorption into the universal godhead), and rebirth. Here he is flanked to his immediate right and left by Gaṇeśa and his consort, Vighneśvarī (to his right), and Viṣṇu with his wife, Lakṣmī (to his left), each of whom is surrounded by musicians caught in action, who contribute in no small part to the feeling of vibrant sound and motion. Within the niches set at either corner were two other active forms of Śiva: to the god's left was Śiva-Vīṇādhara, or Śiva holding a stringed instrument (vīṇā), and to his right was the ferocious Bhairava, who was often associated with Śiva's pure destructive power.[61]

Finding Śiva as lord of the dance in such a prominent location on the temple accompanying Surwāyā's monastery is important, because this particular form seems to have carried particular significance for the Mattamayūras. Temple door lintels featuring Naṭeśa at the center position were not unknown in North and central India, but they were also not particularly common. Yet, at Mattamayūra monastic sites, they became a standard feature (fig. 4.58). At Kadwāhā, for example, we find Śiva dancing at the center of a much simpler lintel. Although both figures are slightly damaged, they most likely followed the increasingly standard representation of Naṭeśa at Mattamayūra sites: this depicted the deity not only dancing, but also holding a special staff, known as a *khaṭvāṅga,* at the top of which was a human skull, signifying Śiva's potential for destruction—even as the god's own face remains benevolent and unperturbed.[62]

Naṭeśa's importance for the Mattamayūras was similarly indicated through inscriptions, in which we often find benedictory verses describing the potency of the dancing lord. In describing Śiva's frenetic yet blissful dance, known as the *ānanda-tāṇḍava,* they employ language that shows both reverence and fearful fascination with the sheer power embodied in the god's movements, which had the power to bring about liberation but that could also, with a single misstep, bring about destruction on a cosmic scale. The inscription from Ranod best highlights the liberating and destructive aspects of Śiva's dance, by proclaiming:

> May the fully formed posture of dancing Śiva, *remover of all sin,* grant to you the things that are best (liberation). Although [his dance] is joyful and performed with care, it causes anxiety to both the gods and demons through its vehemence, as [it] destroys [even] the stability of [the sacred] Mount Kailasa, which bends at the pounding of [Śiva's] foot.[63]

To this we might add a verse from the inscription at the Mattamayūra site at Chandrehe:

FIG. 4.58.
Doorway to the sanctum of the temple accompanying the monastery, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the east, Kadwāhā.

The great snake's hood bows down as the bowl of the Earth spins, turned by nimble feet dancing a quick step. The elephants of the quarters flee. The Cosmic Eggshell whirls without end, twirled by his long arms to the dense beat of the *damaru* drum.

May Śiva's wild dance bring you delight![64]

The power of Śiva's dance to bring about both delight and destruction remains a source of tension within these verses. Yet rather than presenting an opposing pair, delight and destruction within a medieval Śaiva context may be seen as complementary, for it was Śiva's power to destroy a practitioner's ritual impurities that made liberation possible.

If we, at this point, return to the addorsed ascetic figures, they begin to take on yet another layer of meaning, not merely as temple priests, but also as witnesses

to an event that was central to the mythology of the Mattamayūras' origins in the Dāruvana, or Śiva's Pine Forest. According to the story, recounted in Chapter 2, Brahmā approached Śiva, who performed the very first initiation, making Brahmā the first disciple in a lineage stemming back directly to the god Śiva. That same Pine Forest, within a broader spectrum of Śaiva religious texts, was also the place where Śiva set down the rules, for the very first time, for the practice of worshipping the liṅga and also danced his terrifying and thrilling *tāṇḍava* dance. For the Mattamayūras, the tāṇḍava dance may have had particular resonances, as it was also a dance that, according to sources on Indian classical dance and theater, was closely associated with the mating of peacocks, intoxicated in the spring. In Śaiva contexts, the peacock additionally functioned as the close companion and animal mount (*vāhana*) of Śiva's son Kārttikeya.[65] By tracing their genealogy back to the place of Śiva's dance, the Mattamayūras were also implying that they were present to bear witness; this occurred, in some versions of the story, at Śiva's moment of triumph, when the Pine Forest sages came to a full realization of the god's true nature and were taught the right way to worship Śiva.[66]

Situated with a clear view of the monastery, it may well be that these sculpted ascetic figures functioned, on a more fundamental level, as a synecdoche for the resident monastic community, establishing the various parameters of their practice as it occurred in different fashions, both within the monastery and in the temple beyond. At the same time, they may have reinforced their function within a temple arena, where the guru acted not as the object of adoration, but rather as a servant of the lord. Hierarchically positioned close to the sanctum, here the sages acted as part of the god's inner circle of attendants, the ones who performed rituals at the temple for the benefit of a larger community of lay devotees. In both cases, the placement of the stone-sculpted figures of Śaiva sages spatially reinforced the parallel between living gurus and stone gods. This was a particularly potent position within the context of Śaiva Siddhānta—according to which, as Christopher Fuller reminds us, to worship Śiva, one must become Śiva, since "'only Śiva can worship Śiva.'"[67]

Above all, they remind us that if the monastery was the arena of the living guru who presided over a community of ascetics, the temple was the home of the stone liṅga, the ultimate embodiment of the supreme god. But for ascetics, Śiva also functioned as the ultimate guru—the original conveyor of the Śaiva scriptures that were taught by living gurus, stored within monastic dwellings, and represented in sculptural form through the iconography of the Śaiva ascetic teachers. The source of most Śaiva lineages, Śiva also functioned as the first sage in the genealogy of the resident sect. The spatial parallel here may also have reinforced the relationship between the living guru, who acted as "another Śiva" in the monastery, and the stone god, whose presence in the temple was invoked through the attendance of living sages. Here the image of the ascetic, encountered both on and beyond the temple wall, may have once carried a particularly potent resonance with the realm of the divine, reminding us that Śiva, even encountered in stone within the confines of a temple sanctum, remained a perpetually living presence that permeated the world beyond.

Reframing Ritual within the Monastery

The construction of new temples at Surwāyā and Terāhī stimulated a reordering of monastic activity, both in the areas beyond the monasteries' walls and also within the interior of the monastic dwellings. The most important of the changes was the establishment of a new set of cardinal axes, which took on a primary role in redefining the formal organization of spaces within the monastery and in establishing new relationships between the monastery and its accompanying temples. At both sites, the north–south axis bound together the older and newer portions of the dwelling, while also significantly defining a new avenue of entry into the building—through a short, projecting portico that directed movement outward perpendicularly toward the larger site. By contrast, the east–west axis redefined new relationships among rooms within the monastery. More specifically, it directed movement to ritually significant spaces within the monastery in a manner that ran parallel to the nearby temples.

Since the monastery at Surwāyā is the more internally intact of the two buildings, it is easier to see how the north–south axis connected the new portico with the entrance to the older building (see figs. 4.1, 4.4). As noted previously in this chapter, this axis linked the original, earlier building at the south side of the monastery's courtyard with a space just to the west of the accompanying Śiva temple, which possibly served as the locus of the sacrificial pavilion or fire pit. As a result, its positioning in real space reinforced the primacy of the older dwelling, which functioned as a point of reference in the reorganization of the building and the sizing and positioning of the accompanying temple. In terms of movement, it would have directed a resident of the monastery to the west of the temple maṇḍapa, situating him in the proper position to begin the performance of the daily rites preceding entry into the sanctum.

At Terāhī, the building is in much poorer repair, but it is still possible to see the cohesiveness of the reorganization of the overall site's plan. Here, the northern entrance was carefully aligned with a doorway that once stood directly on axis to an older portion of the building to the south.[68] The north–south axis then continued outward and directly toward the temple maṇḍapa standing just a few feet to the north (see figs. 4.27, 4.45, 4.46). Here, we have a meeting of the two thresholds—into the parallel worlds of Śaiva sages and of the supreme lord Śiva himself—that is reinforced through both proximity and scale. Not only was the monastery's portico built to match the dimensions of the temple maṇḍapa, but the buildings' extreme proximity would have made it difficult to exit the ambit of the monastery without also moving directly through the entrance portico of the temple.

The significance of the north–south axis was reinforced by sculptural details, which provide further insight into the engagement between temples and monasteries. At Terāhī and Surwāyā, the monasteries' interiors were characterized by a dearth of significant figural imagery, which posed a fitting contrast to the sumptuously sculpted surfaces of the temples just beyond. However, in both cases, we find a single exception, in the form of a figure of the elephant-headed god Gaṇeśa, son of Śiva, sculpted at the center of a door lintel preceding entry into a ritually important space (see figs. 4.9, 4.59). Usually such sculpted lintels,

containing an appropriate god at their center, were associated with the entrance into a temple sanctum, within which one would encounter an icon of a deity. At Surwāyā and Terāhī, Gaṇeśa functioned as an auspicious deity, girding a critical threshold or junction that was less likely to house an icon than a body of a living sage.

At Surwāyā, the lintel depicting the image of the elephant-headed god was affixed to the center of the door lintel, marking entry into the original freestanding building that stood at the southern culmination of the north–south axis. In this case, his presence may have indicated the inherent sacrality of the dwelling, and particularly of its central room, which likely functioned either as the primary seat of the head guru or as a shrine. Within the context of the renovated building in the tenth century, it seems most likely that these chambers functioned as a privileged place for the guru. It may have been particularly well suited for the performance of key ritual actions, including occasional rites and daily purifications that, according to textual sources, required the practitioner to sit to the south of Śiva and face northward toward the deity, as noted previously. Such a room is attested to, at the very least, in modern ethnographic sources. In his study of activities at a Śaiva maṭha in southern India, for example, Glenn Yocum described a small, special chamber called the *oṭukkam*. Designated as the guru's chamber, the oṭukkam is used not only for receiving visitors and for conducting business, but also for the guru's own spiritual practice. It is the "place where the [guru's] mind is always fixed on God," where the guru sits meditating on Śiva, and where he performs yoga. The oṭukkam described by Yocum resonates with descriptions of a special seat for the guru in Śaiva Siddhānta texts, which mandate that he be seated on a cushion or a throne whenever approached by a pupil or when holding consultations with another teacher.[69]

Gaṇeśa appeared in a different, yet equally important, location at Terāhī: above a doorway leading into the balcony area on the monastery's second story, which was directly overlooking the Śiva temple beyond. Unlike at Surwāyā, the lintel containing the figure of Gaṇeśa was not part of an older portion of the monastery, but rather a component of the late tenth- or early eleventh-century culminating moment that saw the addition of the monastery's upper story.[70] Although iconographically he is similar to the figure at Surwāyā, his body is more fully rounded, and the framing is similarly consistent with a later date. We have already established that at Surwāyā, the figure of Gaṇeśa likely marked the entrance into a set of residential chambers intended for the ritual actions of the residential guru. At Terāhī, however, the room beyond was an open balcony space, framed by a half-wall with ornamentation that put it in dialogue with the temple standing directly across.

At Terāhī, Gaṇeśa's status as Śiva's son was reinforced through the program of the nearby temple, which, as in the case throughout the ninth century, was populated by members of Śiva's immediate family, set in their appropriate positions in the central niches of the wall. As is typical, Śiva's wife, Pārvatī, and his two sons, Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa, appear on the northern, eastern, and southern niches, respectively (fig. 4.60).[71] The resulting program situated Gaṇeśa in the niche that faced southward—perhaps by coincidence rather than plan—in the direction of the

FIG. 4.59.
View of Gaṇeśa at the center of the door lintel of Room 7, c. 10th or 11th century AD. Seen from the north, upper story, monastery, Terāhī.

FIG. 4.60.
View of Gaṇeśa in the central bhadra niche on the south wall of the temple, c. 9th century AD. Seen from the south, Śiva temple, Terāhī.

monastery, just as the Gaṇeśa positioned on the lintel preceding the entry to the balcony was aligned with the temple portico. Regardless of the intention, the two Gaṇeśas—situated, respectively, on the exterior of the temple and interior of the monastery—may have accrued meaning through their juxtaposition. Within the monastery, Gaṇeśa sits in a pose associated with acts of teaching and receiving adoration. By contrast, in the depiction on the temple wall, Gaṇeśa is dancing and acting as a gaṇa, or dwarf-like attendant to the god Śiva. The difference between the two may simply reflect the conventions governing the format and iconography of imagery on disparate parts of a building, in this case temple walls and doorframes. Nonetheless, the pairing seems significant, in part because of the vantage points from which they could be seen. Whereas the Gaṇeśa within the monastery could be viewed only by members of the monastic community, the Gaṇeśa on the temple could be seen from both the exterior and interior of the residential building. If we understand orientation as relational rather than necessarily fixed in real space, both the repetition and variation of imagery may have taken on new meaning, given their respective locations within the site.[72]

The sacrality of the balcony that opened up toward the temple at Terāhī may have stemmed from its function as a semipermeable space that provided a key point of visual axis into the monastic world. Spatially, it seems analogous to the kind of ceremonial windows used in palaces in slightly later periods in Indian and Islamic contexts.[73] It offered an ideal location from which to gaze outward to witness activities during various kinds of ritual actions unfolding around the temple below. At the same time, it also served as an ideal location from which to be seen by those who were gathered in the spaces below. As in the case of palaces, it may have functioned as the "public" facade of the monastery, allowing communities of lay devotees to participate through the practice of guru-darśana, or the act of exchanging glances (darśana) with the holy guru who resided at the head of the monastic community. The question of whether or not such a balcony space constituted a locus for this activity requires some qualification, since we know less about its practice in medieval periods than we know about its practice in monastic contexts today.

Historically, we should assume that the guru himself functioned not merely as a spiritual teacher, but also as a living equivalent of god and an object of adoration.[74] Textual sources attest, at the very least, to the presence of guru shrines (*gurvāyatane*) already by the Gupta era. Usually referred to as a shrine for a preceptor, likely established upon the final emancipation in death (*samādhi*), such guru shrines were sites of active worship, where pūjā offerings were regularly made to the living presence of the past guru, manifest as a soul that approximated the god Śiva.[75] Śaiva Siddhānta texts make more explicit reference to the practice of worshipping the guru's seat of knowledge (vidyāpīṭha), to be performed to the west of the temple. While such worship may have been directed more frequently either toward a set of manuscripts installed upon a plinth or toward a square maṇḍala established for that singular purpose, it was also a practice that functioned as a reaffirmation of the knowledge associated with gurus of a particular lineage.[76] In some cases, the worship was directed toward one's own guru, following the

same sequence as directed toward the god Śiva. The worshipper could express his devotion by washing his guru's feet and making offerings of sandal paste, flowers, incense, and other auspicious substances.[77]

Ethnographic comparisons provide more fertile ground for visualizing ritual action in real space. Yocum's ethnography of a South Indian Śaiva Siddhānta maṭha offers particularly useful insight into the performance of guru-pūjā and guru-darśana, both of which were central to Hindu worship. Pūjā, which literally denotes the act of worship, consists of dressing the deity; making offerings of flowers, food, and incense; pouring oblations of sacred substances; and ringing a bell or singing devotional songs to the deity—in short, it involves treating the god as an honored guest. "Darśana" refers more directly to the "glance" or "seeing" eye contact that constitutes the ultimate exchange between devotee and god. Similarly, guru-darśana, or "exchanging glances" with the guru, and guru-pūjā, or "worship" of the guru, are well-established practices in India today. In his study of monastic life in South India, Yocum describes a special ten-day guru-pūjā celebration, during which the guru is first processed through the streets in a palanquin and then returned to the monastery. In the monastery, he sits enthroned in a special hall, wearing all the accoutrements of divinity, and he gives darśana to a large crowd. One of the resident ascetics performs pūjā to him; offerings are then distributed, after which the guru returns to the privacy of the oṭukkam, or the special chamber described previously.[78]

Religious studies specialists and anthropologists have frequently noted the practice of worshipping a guru in this way in a variety of contexts. In an annual initiation ceremony observed by Daniel Gold at the Chattisgarhi temple of Lahar Tara in 1980, the guru himself sat inside a temporary shrine. He was flanked by two boys, who stood in attendance and held a peacock fan over him, marking him as the focus of devotion. Gold writes: "For more than an hour devotees approached the guru one by one, offering coconuts and usually some money. The guru broke each of the coconuts himself; later the pieces were distributed as *Prasad* [sacred offerings or food]." The ritual at Lahar Tara did not end with the performance of pūjā and darśana followed by the distribution of prāsāda; after being worshipped, the guru then initiated each participating individual, thus bringing each one into the larger religious community centered around the guru as spiritual teacher. Also part of the ceremony was the investiture of new *mahants*, the individuals responsible for supervising branch monasteries or temples. This investiture was an act that would give them "the authority to perform this ceremony at their own places and thus become themselves the object of ritual worship."[79]

While observations such as Gold's and Yocum's situate the guru as the focus of ritual activity, David Miller and Dorothy Wertz's work on Hindu monastic life in Bhuvanesvara provides more concrete evidence for guru shrines and monastic temples. Their study is of particular interest, since a number of the monasteries that they examined were initially established in the early medieval period. In some Bhuvanesvara monasteries, photographs of past gurus, imbued with all the traits of their inherent divinity, are placed on an altar in a shrine, so that the lineage itself

becomes the object of focus during pūjā. The enshrinement of living and past gurus is a widespread practice, and shrines containing images of gurus can be found in many places in India today. In all of these cases, the guru serves as an embodiment of divinity, enshrined within a sanctum and worshipped by devotees. After death he is understood as a deity whose presence can be invoked into an icon that can continue as a recipient of pūjā and abhiṣekam (ritual bathing). In cases such as at Bhuvanesvara, the guru becomes, as Miller and Wertz note, "a living incarnation for this generation, a representative of the deity whom the laity can see and personally revere."[80]

The ritual worship of the guru takes on a particular prominence every year during the annual festival of guru-purnima, which occurs on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Ashadha (July). A pan-Indic festival, guru-pūrṇimā is celebrated at no fewer than fifteen monasteries at Bhubaneśvara, where it serves the function of ritually connecting the guru as an object of worship within the monastery with the liṅga, which embodies the presence of the god Śiva in a temple nearby. According to Miller and Wertz's observations, at the Śaṅkarānanda maṭha, the ceremony begins with the consecration of a small-scale model of the guru's throne, which is worshipped through chanting and oblations. After the worship of the throne, the guru himself becomes the object of a ritual conducted by priests, who wash his feet and shower him with flowers before allowing others to approach. The worship of the guru is then followed by a procession to the Liṅgarāja Mahāprabhu temple, where rice is offered to the liṅga in the sanctum before being distributed among devotees as prāsāda, or blessed food.[81]

These ethnographic observations suggest a number of critical points that may be useful in reimaging ritual life within the monastery. First, the guru in all cases operates as an object of worship—a focus for pūjā and darśana—and is treated as an embodiment of divinity equal in importance to the stone icon enshrined within a temple sanctum. Second, during the course of worship, the guru is often enshrined either in a temporary sanctum or within the space of the monastery itself. A special altar housing images of past and present gurus is sometimes established within the monastery. In other cases, a separate shrine or temple is built exclusively for the purpose of housing the guru—both as a living being sitting at the head of a maṭha and in the form of sculptural representations that function as embodiments of a divinized lineage. Finally, on occasions such as the guru-pūrṇimā festival at the Śaṅkarānanda maṭha at Bhuvaneśvara, the worship of the guru, as a living incarnation of Śiva within the monastery, is ritually linked with the worship of a stone image of the god Śiva housed within a nearby temple. Once the guru is worshipped as the divinized head of the religious community, a procession continues onward to the liṅga in the temple. The two—guru and liṅga—can be understood not only as manifesting the same divine presence, but also as performing critically interrelated functions, for it is only through the conference of initiation and the grace of the guru that devotees can follow the path that will bring them closer to god.

In this sense, the front balcony, seen at Terāhī and other monastic sites, may have played a crucial role in configuring the relationship between monastery and

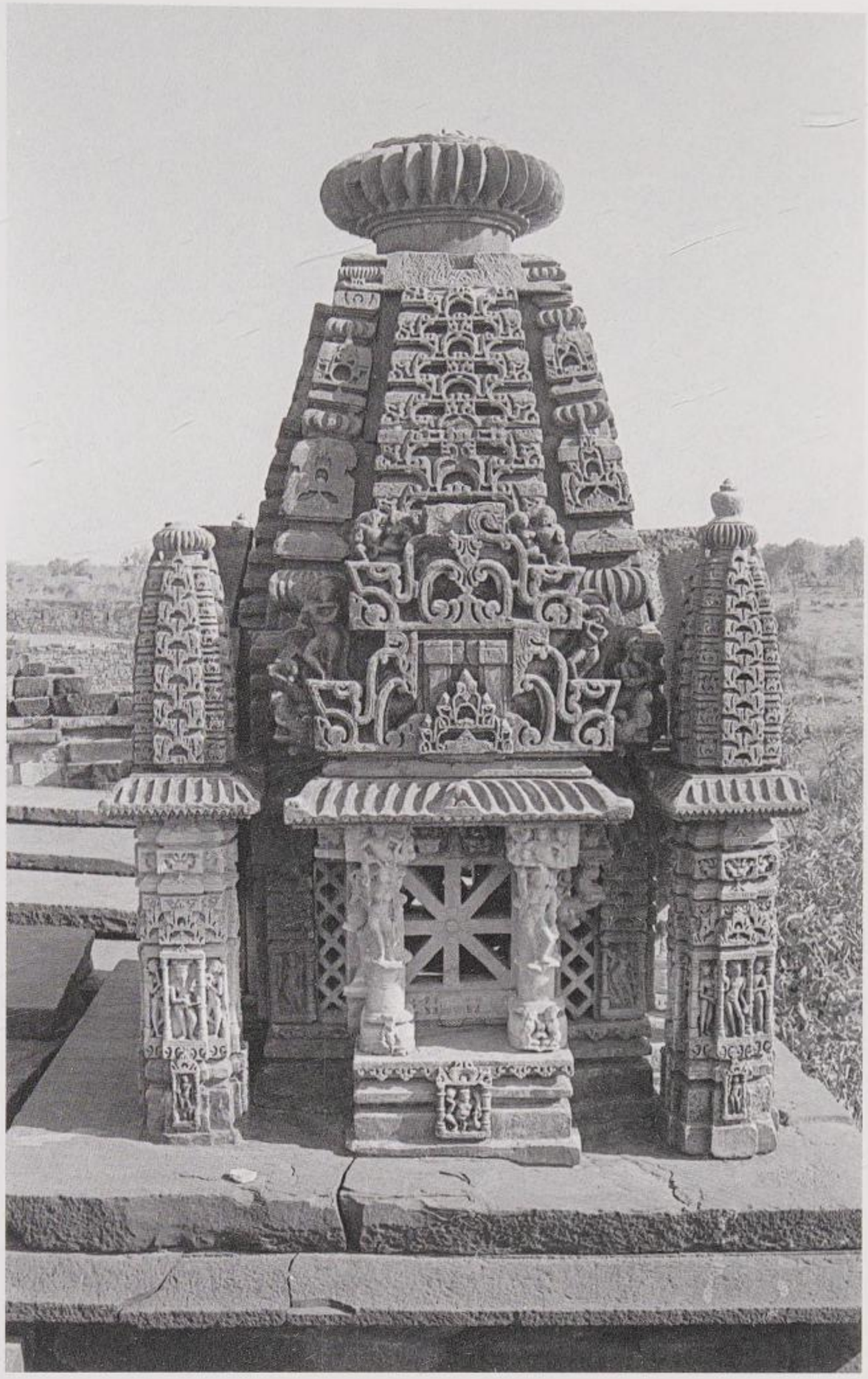


FIG. 4.61.
View of the miniature shrine tower (sarvatobhadra) above Room 9, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, monastery, Surwāyā.

temple. In a complementary fashion, other rooms within the two monasteries may have functioned as spaces of enshrinement, and possibly even internal shrines. The clearest example can be seen at Surwāyā, this time in the set of rooms that occupied the northeastern quadrant of the building and that were set along the new east–west axis (Rooms 7–9) (see fig. 4.19). As noted above, this set of rooms culminated in an unusually configured room, which was illuminated particularly through a double-storied space just beyond its entrance, which was also marked visibly on the exterior of the building through the addition of a miniature shrine tower (sarvatobhadra) rising directly above, at the level of the roof (fig. 4.61). The choice of applying a sarvatobhadra type as a finial on the roof of a monastery is curious. Literally denoting a structure that was open on all four sides, sarvatobhadras were often used for smaller shrines containing a Śiva-liṅga.[82] Although it was not common to find such miniature shrines used as a form of superstructure, it was not unprecedented within the region. In particular, it recalls earlier experiments in temple architecture at sites like Kuchdon in Lalitpur, a district not far to the east of Surwāyā.[83] At Surwāyā, the miniature shrine tower

was positioned specifically so that it functioned as a parallel to the now fallen superstructure (śikhara) of the temple by its side (see fig. 4.1).

The visual parallel between the temple and the monastery created through the sarvatobhadra tower finial on the exterior opens the possibility for reading the space below, in Room 9, as particularly sacred. From this perspective, it is not insignificant that the passage through the interior can also be seen as moving parallel to the temple, along the east–west axis, through a pillared temple hall, and eventually toward the sanctified chamber (see figs. 4.4, 4.18–4.22). However, the room itself seems particularly unsuitable for acting as an internal shrine; it is not a contained square room, but rather an oblong space that would never have served to house a permanent stone icon. At the same time, it was a dynamic space within a living monastery, and it is possible that its function and meaning may have been dependent on specific ritual actions and various occasions. For example, one can image the space being utilized for typical daily rituals, such as the guru's daily discourse and recitations. One could imagine a priest or guru easily accessing ritual implements from the bench or shelf installed to the south and performing a daily pūjā, or worship, of a mobile icon or liṅga intended not for public consumption, but for initiated members of the monastic community. The guru or active practitioner in this case would be facing northward toward the temple, or, as textually prescribed, standing to the south of both the permanent and portable liṅgas in the temple and monastery, respectively. In this sense, sculpted reliefs, such as the one found at the Lakṣmaṇa temple at Khajurāho, may hold the key to interpreting such spaces (see fig. 0.8). In such reliefs, the guru typically is seated within a distinct spatial zone, accompanied by attendants with ritual implements and a crowd of disciples, either receiving instruction or witnessing or participating in various rituals. Indeed, the arrangement of these figures seems so uncannily like the layout of the space of Room 9 at Surwāyā that it is hard not to think of the two as functioning in an analogous fashion.[84]

On a different type of occasion, the same room (Room 9) may have functioned in a completely different way, possibly even serving as a site of encounter with the "enshrined" figure of the living guru. One can easily imagine the guru himself sitting at the culmination of the passage along the east–west axis, brilliantly illuminated through the upper-story window. As such, he would have been effectively positioned at the culminating end of a path that ran parallel to that of the temple outside. This may have formed an ideal location for devotional practices, such as guru-darśana and guru-pūjā, or the worship of the guru in ways that were parallel to worship in a temple. In this case, a relevant spatial analogy can be made between Śaiva and Buddhist sites. Buddhist monasteries, such as Cave 2 at the famous site of Ajanta (c. sixth century AD) or Vihāra 45 at Sanchi (c. tenth century AD), contained a large internal shrine set directly along the main axis, which extended through an open courtyard toward the building's front entrance (fig. 4.62). Housed within these internal shrines was a large sculpted figure of the Buddha, his hands fixed in a gesture of teaching, signifying his status as the ultimate guru, the source of the dharma that could lead to liberation.[85] In these contexts, the Buddha icon functioned not merely as an object for devotion, but also

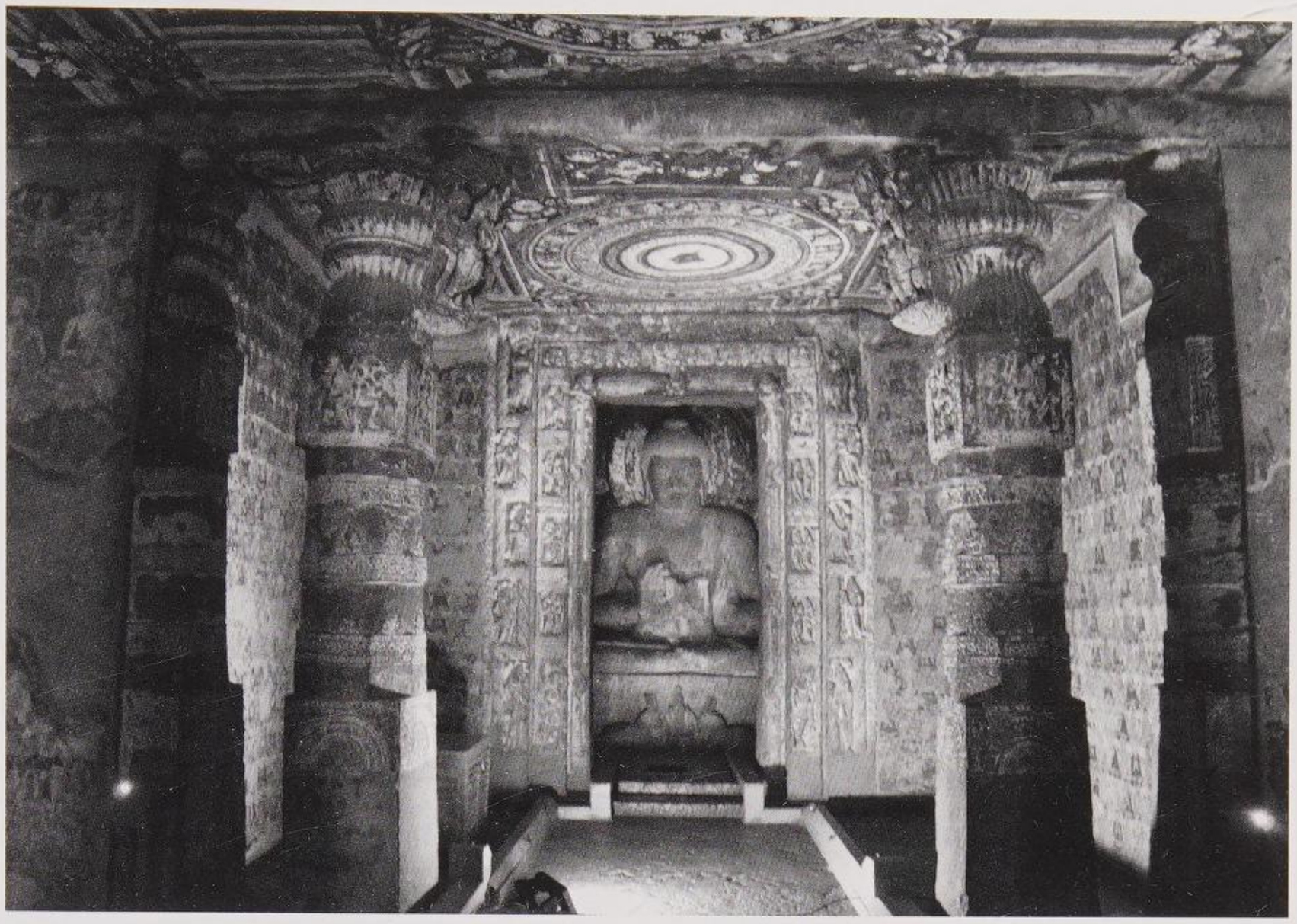


FIG. 4.62.
View of the Buddha enshrined in a vihāra, Cave 2, c. 5th century AD. Ajanta.

as an embodiment of the teachings passed down originally by the Buddha, as the first in a continuous lineage of gurus.[86]

A final clue toward seeing the room as one that may have framed the guru's actual physical body comes from a closer examination of the sculptural imagery on the sarvatobhadra, or miniature shrine tower, that features images of ascetics engaging in various ritual actions (fig. 4.63). They stand facing frontally within framed niches on the pillars flanking the sarvatobhadra's four corners, appropriately marking the central space under which the guru himself may have been seated. While ascetics were often employed as part of an expanding vocabulary of auspicious temple imagery, their presence here—on the roof of a monastery—may hold special significance. These figures in particular are marked as ascetics; they wear their hair high in matted locks and carry rosaries, pots, and other emblems indicating their practice of austerities. In short, they are particularly appropriate for a monastic space occupied by a renunciant guru, surrounded by disciples who had effectively renounced the world.

In addition to the rooms laid out along the north–south and east–west axes, the monasteries at Terāhī and Surwāyā feature at least one more space that appears to have been designated for specialized ritual. This was a room that was found in a similar location, toward the northeast of the monastery's upper story (Room 8 at both Surwāyā and Terāhī) (see figs. 4.24, 4.25). In both cases, we find a room fitted with a small, raised basin and drain that look as if they could have acted in support of a movable icon. The positioning is particularly striking when considered in relationship to the monastery's main temple. At Surwāyā, the positioning of the basin and drain would have been in line with the entryway to the temple standing just outside. At Terāhī, it would have been aligned with the eastern end

FIG. 4.63.
View of a sculpted ascetic figure (detail), situated on the sarvatobhadra above Room 9, c. 10th century AD. Seen from the south, monastery, Surwāyā.

of the temple's proper sanctum. In both cases, a small window was set just above the raised basin and drain, so that the temple itself could be easily seen by anyone performing a ritual in that spot—particularly since the ritual would likely have required the practitioner to face north, as discussed above. In their layout and plans, both of these rooms may represent yet another carefully designed point of permeability between the interior and exterior ritual worlds inhabited by the monastic community.

While these ideas are, to a large extent, necessarily conjectural, there is no doubt that the axial arrangement of the newly expanded monastery at Surwāyā in the tenth century was intended to construct meaningful relationships between the internal world of the monastic community and the devotional realm of the temple. The old, eighth-century residential core became axially aligned with the heart of the tenth-century temple complex outside its walls. And the new east–west axis created a new kind of sacred space within the monastery's walls. Aligned parallel to the main temple seen in the far end of the complex, this new sacred space may have been intended to construct an analogy between the living guru and the stone liṅga, both of which functioned as "another Śiva on earth." The extension of the

miniature shrine on the roof of the monastery may have strengthened this notion. It may have marked the seat of the guru, which formed a new zone of ritual interaction between gurus, disciples, and lay devotees. And it certainly suggests that maṭhas were not merely zones for ascetic residence, but also sacred buildings designed to carefully structure devotional activity.

Overall, Surwāyā and Terāhī offer a set of spatial parallels that are highly useful in deciphering the ways in which the monastery offered a response to the increasing importance of temple ritual for growing lay devotional communities. At the same time, they remain very different case studies. The monastery at Surwāyā became the hub for an expanding temple complex around a more removed retreat, which may have remained on the outskirts of a larger village or town. In contrast, the building at Terāhī functioned as the hub of a growing settlement. In both cases, the monasteries themselves appear to have become both refuges for a community of sages studying under the tutelage of their head guru, as well as loci for ritual activity that existed parallel to that of the temples beyond their walls.

The monasteries' active engagement with their temples reminds us that even the most fragmented of stone monuments retain traces of ritual action, through both sculpted imagery and the structure of architectural spaces. In the context of the temples, every moment was initiated through ritual action, from the selection of the site and the installation of the icon to the purifications that occurred on a daily basis. The many musicians and divinities adorning the temples with garlands in the sculpted program of the temple doorframes and on the ceiling of the preceding porticos may have visually resonated with the garlands that were given as offerings within the temples and their icons during purificatory rites and the practice of daily pūjā. Similarly, the dancing figures may have evoked the sounds and sights associated with festive reenactments during Śivaratri and other events that were focused on the god Śiva, while the ascetic figures addorsed to the temple pillars would have participated in perpetuity. At Terāhī, the temple is much more modest in scale and ornamentation, as befitting its earlier date. But the presence of the monastic community remains equally felt through the pair of ascetic figures positioned at the upper corners of the sanctum doorframe. While this imagery carried meaning as iconographic emblems, within such close proximity to a monastic residence, they may have taken on new meaning. For scholars working today, they remind us that visual imagery was anything but static; rather, it resonated actively with the once-dynamic movements of living communities of sages and devotees.

CHAPTER 5

Constructing the Guru

Monastic Networks in the Kingdom of the Kalachuris

In the first half of the tenth century, the unfolding of new events suddenly elevated the Mattamayūra monastic network to the level of a major transregional movement. The catalyst appears to have been the marriage of an up-and-coming king, Yuvarājadeva I (reigned AD 915–945), of the prominent Kalachuri dynasty in the region of Ḍāhaladeśa, to a queen whose family may have been among the Mattamayūras' earliest royal patrons. Shortly after their union, both the monarch and his new queen invited two sages, Prabhāvaśiva and Īśvaraśiva, to come from their homes and take up posts as head gurus at two different centers within their larger kingdom. Within two generations, the successors of these two sages had branched out by establishing new monastic dwellings both at remote outposts and at larger urban settlements. The movement of the Mattamayūras eastward, well over 200 miles (320 kilometers) from their point of origin south of Gwalior to the heart of the Kalachuri kingdom, was no insignificant matter. From the perspective of the Kalachuris, the resulting monastic network connected disparate parts of the kingdom, ranging from the royal capital at Tripurī to the famous pilgrimage city of Vārāṇasī (Banāras), famed for its many stepped ghats leading down to the Ganges River. At the same time, it elevated the status of the Mattamayūras from a fairly localized religious order into a major monastic institution patronized by one of the most powerful royal dynasties in medieval central India (see figs. 0.6, 5.1).

Because the inscriptional record in Ḍāhaladeśa is both copious and remarkably well preserved, much more is known about the Mattamayūras' relationship to their Kalachuri royal patrons here than at their point of origin further west. The contents of these inscriptions leaves no doubt that the Mattamayūras' prominent positions as rājagurus within the Kalachuri kingdom gave them unprecedented power to influence religious policy and institutionalize their practices through the establishment of well-endowed and royally sanctioned monasteries. However, just as the harbingers of historical fate give with one hand a seemingly fortuitous wealth of textual information, they present with the other an equally notable paucity of actual surviving architectural materials. Unlike in Gopakṣetra, where the inscriptional record is outstripped by the richness of the remaining architecture, in the Kalachuri kingdom, the case is quite the opposite. Indeed, one of the biggest challenges presented by the material from the Kalachuri kingdom is the simple fact that so few of the actual buildings still survive today. Over a century's worth of intensive exploration has uncovered just one significant and intact monastery, situated in the remote village of Chandrehe, that is definitively attributable to the Mattamayūras (fig. 5.2). In addition, a few smaller and more fragmented sites have recently come to light at Koḍal, Raneh, and Chunari. All of the other major monasteries, known well through the inscriptional record, have long since disappeared from the architectural landscape.[1]

Taking the monastery at Chandrehe as its point of departure, this chapter examines how the paradigms that emerged at earlier sites formed the basis for further architectural experimentation not in the peripheries of larger kingdoms, but rather at the heart of a major royally sponsored network. More than at any other surviving Mattamayūra site, Chandrehe was a product of a religious order that had, by the time of its construction in AD 973, become a central part of the

FIG. 5.1.
Map of the Kalachuri kingdom, showing the distribution of monasteries and inscriptions.

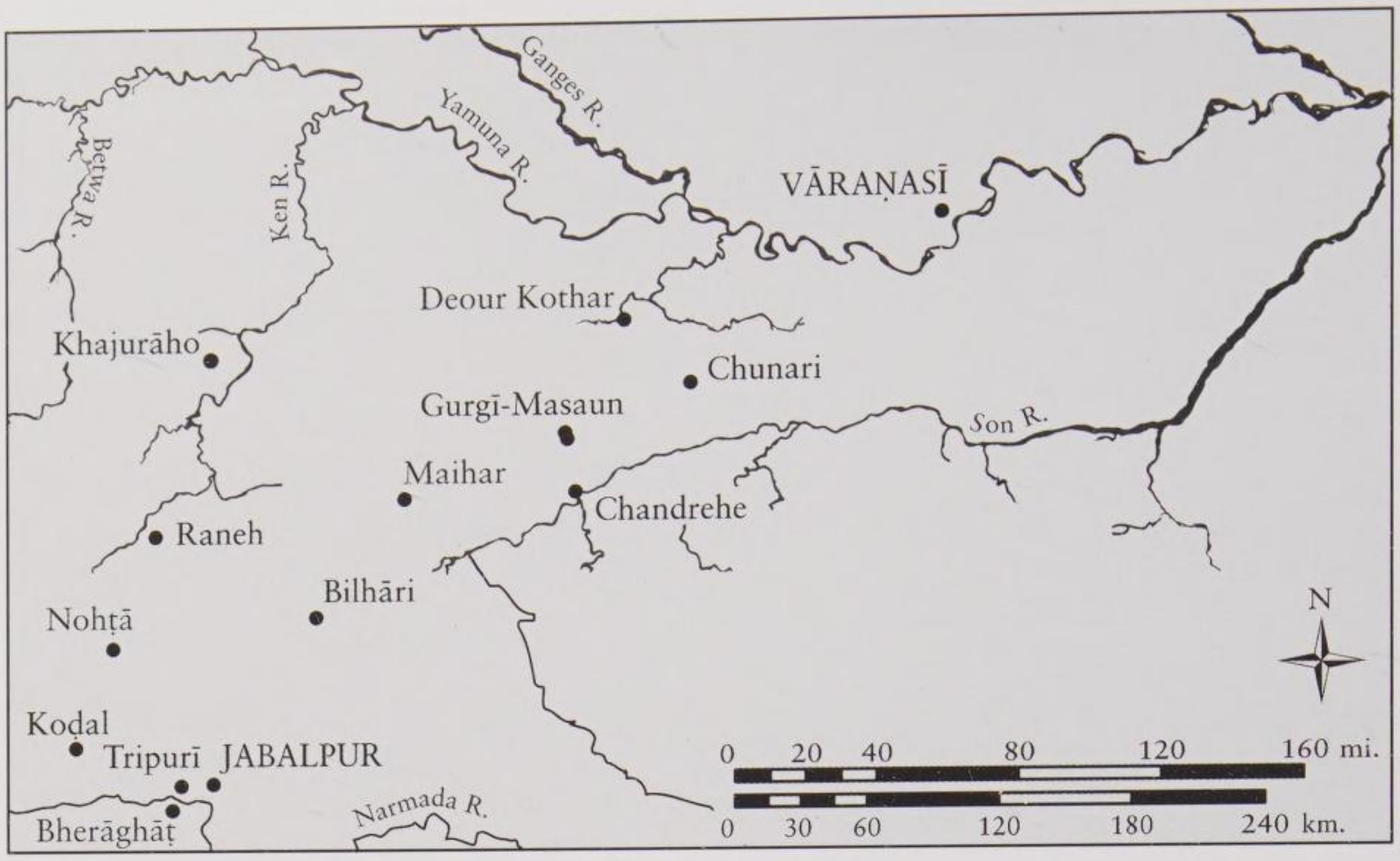


FIG. 5.2.
View of the monastic site, c. AD 950–973. Seen from the west, Chandrehe.

expanding Kalachuri royal state. Although Chandrehe represents what would have been an idyllic holy refuge, nestled against a hilly outcrop not far from the banks of the Son River, it was a site that was closely connected to larger, urban centers. Despite its relatively rural location, far from the centers of Kalachuri patronage and power, the monastery at Chandrehe was not a small-scale monastic dwelling, but rather a monumentally rendered institutional structure. It was not merely an emulation of the model of the major monastic institution seen at sites such as Kadwāhā. Rather, the monastery at Chandrehe represents a synthesis of elements also associable with the model of the removed ascetic retreat.

In synthesizing the two models—of institutional center and hermitage—Chandrehe's monastery reveals both a deep engagement with building practices at other Mattamayūra sites and a renewed investment in bridging the gap between the removed ascetic retreat and the realm of courtly practices and royal patronage. After all, the power of the Mattamayūras within the Kalachuri kingdom resided, more than at any place previously, in the ability of individual sages to navigate their relationships with their Kalachuri patrons. Unlike in the cases of Kadwāhā, Ranod, Surwāyā, or Terāhī, which came to be central only long after they had been established, Chandrehe represents a retreat whose maker, a guru named Prabodhaśiva, was already thoroughly integrated into the structure of a larger state.

The Making of a Royally Sponsored Network

The establishment of the monastery at Chandrehe in AD 973 represents a moment that was neither a beginning nor a culmination, but rather part of an ongoing expansion of a larger network of royally sponsored monastic sites, beginning with the invitation of the Mattamayūra sages by the king Yuvarājadeva I and his most favored wife, the queen Nohalā-devi, to settle in their kingdom. The first was the guru named Prabhāvaśiva, whom the king installed at a monastery he had built "at an enormous expense" at the political and religious center of Gurgī.[2] The second was the sage Īśvaraśiva, who was granted a gift of villages by the queen and given stewardship of a new temple and monastery at Bilhāri. Both Prabhāvaśiva and Īśvaraśiva were recruited from sites in an area described in Kalachuri inscriptions as "Madhumatī," after the river that flowed past Terāhī and just a few miles to the east of the Mattamayūra center at Kadwāhā.[3]

The move from the Madhumatī River region to the Kalachuri kingdom may have been motivated as much by politics as by religiosity. King Yuvarājadeva I was no common monarch; rather, he was the individual largely credited with establishing the Kalachuris as one of the key regional powers vying for control over central India during the period following the decline of the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras of Kannauj. In addition to enlarging and consolidating the kingdom through military campaigns, Yuvarājadeva I also successfully established his court as a major cultural center by recruiting many fine new poets, the most famous of whom was the illustrious Rājaśekhara, who had previously worked directly under the imperial Gūrjara Pratīhāras. The enticement of gurus from prominent Mattamayūra centers worked analogously as a demonstration of the piety and religious power of the new Kalachuri king. The connection to the Mattamayūras, more specifically, may have been through the queen, Nohāla-devi, who appears to have hailed originally from Gopakṣetra—and from the royal family stemming from King Avantivarman, mentioned in the inscription still affixed to the monastery at Ranod. Because the Kalachuris were constantly renegotiating territory with the Chandellas of Jejākabhukti, their immediate neighbors to the west, an alliance with both the Mattamayūras and Nohāla-devi's family may have created a web of affiliations that bolstered the Kalachuris' claims to power from both the east and west of the Chandella kingdom.[4]

The creation of two new monastic centers was likely linked to the consolidation of Kalachuri power under King Yuvarājadeva I and his immediate successors. Gurgī and Bilhāri were notably sites of no small significance. At the time of the Mattamayūras' advent, both Gurgī and Bilhāri were growing religious centers situated strategically within the kingdom. Whereas Gurgī was located at the far northern reaches of Ḍāhaladeśa, Bilhāri was positioned at the midpoint, approximately halfway between Gurgī and the royal capital at Tripurī, which in turn was located near the southern extent of the kingdom. The simultaneity of these establishments was unlikely to have been coincidental. The recruitment of powerful sages to occupy new sites established not by sages, but by the king, was likely part of a conscious effort to strengthen the religious and administrate networks running through the kingdom. It is likely that Yuvarājadeva I also recruited a Mattamayūra sage to serve as his rājaguru, while founding new monastic institutions at regular intervals heading northward from the capital.

Although neither Gurgī nor Bilhāri retain any trace of their original monasteries, both contain a mass of archaeological remains that attest to the sheer scope of their respective religious landscapes. Situated on an open plain near the source of the great Mahānadī River, which flowed through the eastern range of the Vindhya Mountains and upper Son River valley, Gurgī was once a grand political and religious center. When Alexander Cunningham visited it in 1884–85, he noted the remains of "a large fort called Rehuta" and a large mound "covered with ruined temples" that was known then as Gurgaj.[5] The fort itself was sizable: its walls, many of which are no longer visible today, covered a circuit of about 11,800 feet (3,600 meters). The mound of temple ruins was similarly impressive, covering approximately 1,200 square feet (110 square meters) and varying between 10 and 15 feet (3 and 4.5 meters) in height. Several monumental sculptures found in situ indicate the scale and ambition of the temple that would have once housed an icon of Śiva. The most impressive were brought to Rewa, just 12 miles (19 kilometers) away. Among these were a large sculpture of Śiva with his wife, Pārvatī (Umā-Maheśvara), and a monumental gateway (*toraṇa*) that has long since been affixed to a portal in the palace of the mahārāja of Rewa, where it has attracted the attention of scholars and photographers, including the famed Raja Deen Dayal (figs. 5.3, 5.4).[6]

The high level of royal patronage suggested by the monumental sculptures uncovered at the Gurgaj mound is fairly significant for the Mattamayūras' story, as it was in the context of the large temple mound that the inscription of the sect was also found. In addition to confirming that the monastery was attached to a larger religious complex, it also suggests that it functioned as an example of a royally sponsored institutional center (maṭha) rather than an ascetic hermitage or retreat (āśrama). The sculptures that once adorned its walls and inner sanctum(s) attest to the beauty of Kalachuri royal art and indicate that the monument's scale would have rivaled even the temples at Khajurāho. This was not a humble shrine built for the use of the monastic community, but rather a major temple for which the Mattamayūras took on important roles as members of a monastic community and likely also as ācāryas, or attending temple priests. The scale of the temple arena, in particular, may have surpassed that seen at Kadwāhā or Surwāyā and may indicate a crucial shift in

FIG. 5.3.
Gateway recovered from the Gurgaj temple mound at Gurgī, c. late 10th–early 11th century AD. Currently affixed to the mahārāja's fort, Rewa. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 5.4.
Śiva embracing the goddess Umā (Umā-Maheśvara), c. late 10th–early 11th century AD. Recovered from the temple mound at Gurgī.

the status of the presiding guru. Whereas at Kadwāhā or Surwāyā, the guru seems to have served as the head of a monastic order that was also responsible for the maintenance of temples, here he may have functioned as the head of a community of temple priests who were also members of a monastic community.

Like Gurgī, Bilhāri was also a major religious center, situated in the heart of the Narmadā valley, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) northeast of the capital at Tripurī, where the monastery likely functioned in the service of the temple town. This much is clear even at the level of the inscription, which describes the initial establishment of the site through Queen Nohalā-devi's construction of a temple dedicated to the god Śiva. The temple itself was eulogized as one whose "cloud-scraping tops trip the sun" on its daily passage across the sky, and that was topped by a "lofty fluted disc [*āmalasāraka*]" that "resembled flocks of pigeons" when covered in the mists of the monsoon season.[7] It was for the purpose of maintaining this temple that Nohalā-devi recruited the sage Īśvaraśiva. To the sage alone, she donated the revenue from two nearby villages, ostensibly as a reward for scholarship. To the temple, she gifted the revenue of at least seven more. As at Gurgī, the sheer quantity and quality of sculptures and architectural fragments found scattered through Bilhāri and on display at regional museums attest to the site's status as a major religious and artistic center. But the only temple from the Kalachuri period that still survives is the much-damaged Kāmakandalā

FIG. 5.5.
Architectural fragments and sculptures, c. late 10th–early 11th century AD. Gathered in the vicinity of the Viṣṇu-Varāha temple, Bilhāri.

temple, datable to the early tenth century, that stands atop a hill, perhaps not unintentionally calling to mind the inscription's evocation of a temple whose tower touched the sky.[8]

Today, Bilhāri is dominated by a great lake known as the Lakṣman Sāgar, which is, in fact, an artificial tank established in support of the many temples that once stood at its bank. When Alexander Cunningham traveled through Bilhāri in 1873–74, he observed no fewer than ninety-five carved pillars, culled from temples and probably also from the former monastery that had been reused in the making of private homes.[9] We still find a large number of sculptures stored in the premises of a greatly reconstructed Viṣṇu-Varāha temple, which itself is fitted with an exquisite tenth-century doorframe. The extent of the sculptural fragments, executed most likely by a major sculptural workshop, attest to Bilhāri's importance as a royally patronized sacred center, populated not only by the Mattamayūras, but also by a wide variety of other religious groups, including Vaiṣṇavas and Jains. Among the more remarkable sculptures are a tenth- or eleventh-century image of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī on Garuḍa, probably once housed within a temple sanctum; a collection of Śiva-liṅgas, including a particularly striking broken torso of a multiheaded Śiva; and several Jain saints (*tīrthaṅkara*) (fig. 5.5).[10]

The wide range of the material still found at Bilhāri is not surprising, given that the inscription recording the original advent of the Mattamayūras during the lifetime of Nohalā-devi was quite extensive. It was written in two parts and during two different moments. The part that described Nohalā-devi's temple functioned as a stand-alone praśasti, likely composed at the time of the original commission, detailing her installation of the sage Īśvaraśiva. This inscription was, as Kielhorn originally noted, "renewed and enlarged" two or three generations later, by King

Yuvarājadeva II (reigned AD 980–990), the grandson of Yuvarājadeva I.[11] The new verses effectively signify a story of continuing royal patronage, more so of the Mattamayūra religious order than of the temple site. In this telling, Yuvarājadeva II inserted himself into a longer history of patronage of the resident Mattamayūra sages, begun by his grandmother Nohalā-devi and continued under his father, King Lakṣmaṇarāja II (reigned AD 945–970). According to the renewed inscription, Lakṣmaṇarāja II offered a monastery described as "Vaidyanātha" to a guru named Hṛdayaśiva. Hṛdayaśiva, in turn, passed down the monastery at Bilhāri—which became known as Nauhaleśvara, after its patron, the Queen Nohalā-devi—to "his well-conducted disciple Aghoraśiva," who was still presiding as head guru during the reign of Yuvarājadeva II.[12]

Yuvarājadeva II's intention in his portion of the inscription at Bilhāri was to provide a genealogy for the resident sage, Aghoraśiva, and to situate his own activities within a larger history of religious giving. The last verses of the inscription record Yuvarājadeva II generously granting to the monastery the privilege to collect taxes on goods in the marketplace, including salt, oil mills, betel nuts, black pepper, dried ginger, vegetables, eggplants, liquids, elephants, and horses. In addition, taxes were levied on shopkeepers and independent merchants, who were required to have a voucher in order to exhibit their goods. Many of the taxes were to be paid in very specific amounts of cash, indicating that a monetary economy was in effect even in the far north of the kingdom.[13] The inscription also mandated the participation of larger communities in a religious festival at the monastery, by requiring inhabitants of a number of towns and villages, including the capital at Tripurī, to "bring [to the monastery] the beautiful wooden bull every day [at the festival] of the god for the performance of the religious rite."[14] Unfortunately, the inscription is fragmented and partially illegible toward the end, making any further details concerning the identity or nature of the festival impossible to determine. Nonetheless, the decipherable portion makes it clear that the monastery functioned as a major center of periodic religious festivals during which it played a role in integrating communities from multiple places within the kingdom.

As at Bilhāri, the monastery at Gurgī continued to grow over the course of the next few generations, as attested to by the inscription, which was composed not at the time of Yuvarājadeva I's original foundation, but rather during the reign of his great-great-grandson, King Kokalladeva II (reigned AD 990–1015), who ascended to the throne after his own father, Yuvarājadeva II, passed away. The inscription, which is unfortunately damaged toward the end, records the donation of at least nine or ten more villages and two fields, and possibly a "whole city crowded with citizens" in support of the sages residing in the monastery. In addition, King Kokalladeva II gave a separate grant of five villages to the nearby Śiva temple, presumably the monumental structure that stood next to the monastery, which was known at the time by the name of "Somanātha." While not nearly as extensive as the record at Bilhāri, the Gurgī inscription similarly aimed to assert the importance of the Mattamayūra sages for the Kalachuri state, while also seamlessly recording a continuity of patronage at an expanding monastic center. Just as Yuvarājadeva II's addition to the earlier inscription at Bilhāri established

a fluid path between his own interventions and the activities of his grandmother and father, Kokalladeva II's inscription at Gurgī was bookended on either side by the activities of his great-great-grandfather, Yuvarājadeva I, and it remains the only surviving record for the establishment of the monastery three generations earlier. As in the case of any royal praśasti, authority was predicated not only on the perception of a genealogy stretching back into the past, but also on the acceptance that the ruling dynasty would continue to rule in perpetuity. This much is made clear by the conventional wish, stated in the last verse of the main body of the praśasti, that the original grant "made by the illustrious Yuvarājadeva I and preserved by the succeeding rulers, endure till the end of time."[15]

Taken in this context, the monasteries at Gurgī and Bilhāri represent a sustained effort, over the course of over a century, at building an integrated network of royally sponsored monastic sites that were attached to major temples. This was a network that far outstripped its counterpart in Gopakṣetra, both in scale and geographic scope, as the Kalchuris controlled a much vaster kingdom. Perhaps the most important new establishment, likely already in place by the time of Yuvarājadeva I, was at the capital of Tripurī, where the head guru became the ultimate authority not merely over a monastery populated by ascetics, but also over many religious affairs in the Kalachuri state. In any case, by the late tenth century, the monastic network extended from the Kalachuri capital at Tripurī along the Son River as far north as the reaches of the Gangetic plain. The Kalachuri kings were known to have controlled the famous pilgrimage city of Banāras. By the reign of the powerful king Karṇa (reigned AD 1041–73), Kalachuri monarchs traveled to perform rituals in honor of their ancestors (*śrāddha* rituals) in plain view of the holy Ganges River.[16]

Perhaps in response to the integration of their monastic network into the administrative structure of the Kalachuri state, Mattamayūra inscriptions from Ḍāhaladeśa reveal a degree of nostalgia for the Mattamayūras' origins as forest-dwelling ascetics in regions further west, which took on the aura of an almost mythical and magical imaginaire. In recounting the genealogy of sages, the authors of the inscriptions from Kalachuri sites created wonderfully poetic plays not only on the name "Mattamayūra," but also on "Madhumatī," the latter of which denoted the Mahuār River that flowed past the monastery at Terāhī, as noted earlier in the book. At Chandrehe, the sage Prabhāvaśiva, who was the first sage to venture into Kalachuri territory, was remembered even three generations later as "the lord of Madhumatī." In the Gurgī inscription, the place known as Madhumatī was even more evocatively described as a spiritually rich landscape. The inscription proclaims, directly after the opening benedictory verses (maṅgala-śloka):

> There is in this world Madhumatī, the abode of those who are versed in the Śaiva Siddhāntas,—which contains excellent Ācāryas of noble conduct; in which the peacocks dance and shriek with joy at the untimely appearance of clouds caused by the uninterrupted mass of dark smoke of the ever-kindled (*sacrificial*) fires. . . . Where appeared the first best ascetics, whose minds were restrained by vows, (*and*) who taught the great and flawless doctrine of Śiva to their disciples;—whose well-known

> fame, having the bright lustre of nectar, even now whitens the universe, delighting the prosperous and learned men even as moonlight does the assemblage of night-lotuses.[17]

Such poetic evocations may have intersected more with literary practices in the Kalachuri court than with the realities of the actual places of the Mattamayūras' residence. At the same time, they call to mind an otherworldly, idyllic place at a moment when, perhaps not incoincidentally, the Mattamayūras were becoming more institutionalized and worldly than ever before.

The Establishment of an Ascetic Retreat

Despite the high level of institutionalization within the Kalachuri kingdom, the only fully intact monastery to survive was not at the heart of a major political or religious center, but rather in the fairly remote village of Chandrehe. The best-known of all Mattamayūra sites, Chandrehe was first noticed in 1874 by J. D. Beglar, who, lamenting the poor repair of the building, wrote, "It is much to be regretted that the building is not in sufficiently good preservation to furnish accurate plans and drawings, to enable every detail of its construction and arrangement to be fully made out."[18] Much of the monastery was overgrown by "bamboo jungle," and the courtyard was dominated by a giant fallen pipal tree. Although Beglar correctly identified the building as a monastery, he naturally assumed royal patronage and described it as a palace in an accompanying set of plates. Additional work was undertaken under the supervision of Henry Cousens in 1906–7, during which sculptures were collected and a wooden fence was erected around the site. Chandrehe continued to receive sustained attention from the Western Circle of the Archaeological Survey under R. D. Banerji, who revisited the site multiple times between 1918 and 1921. The findings from these visits were published as part of a longer publication in 1931. During his visits, Banerji was able to assess Chandrehe's key architectural features, and he produced a number of architectural drawings and a ground plan; this plan was likely done very quickly, as it is inaccurate in relationship not only to what is seen in situ today, but also to Banerji's own descriptions in his longer written account. His report remains remarkably well considered and invaluable, nonetheless, especially given the changes that have since occurred at the site.[19]

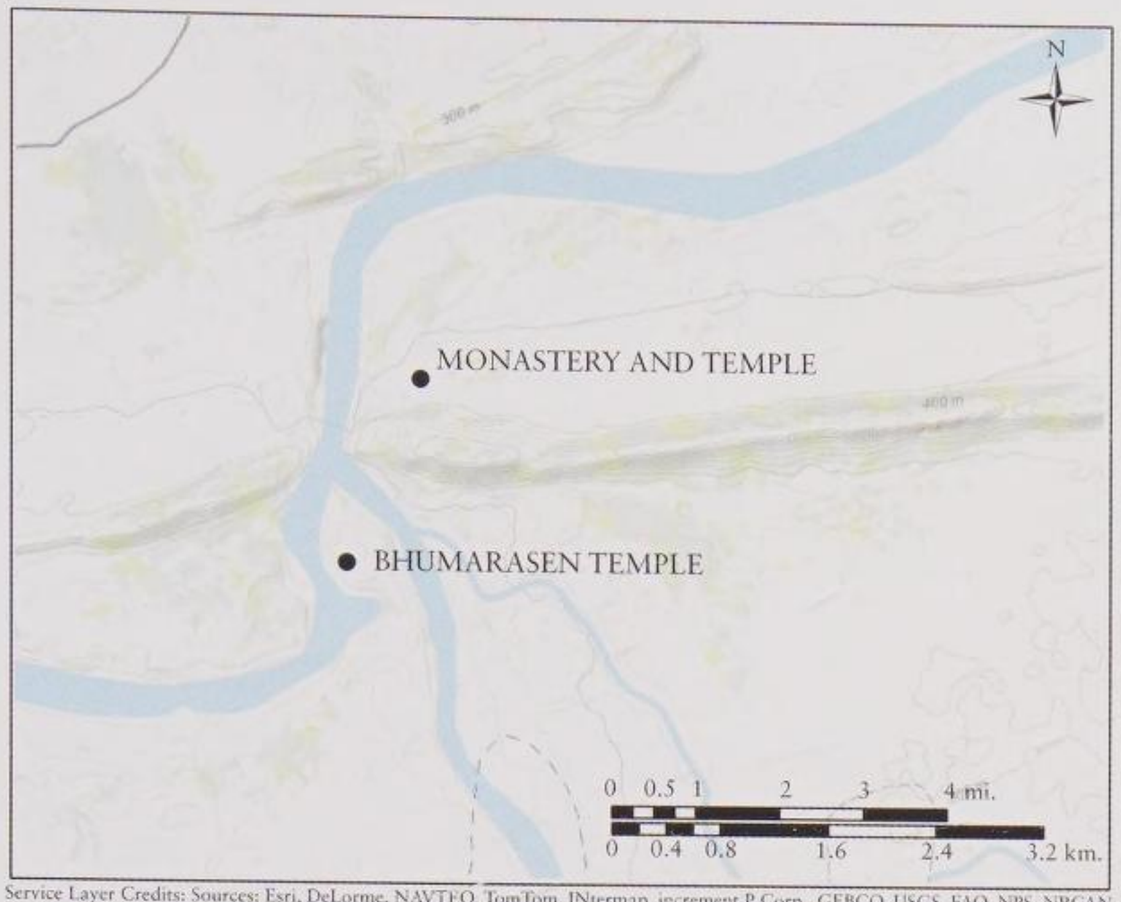
The discernment of a royal influence at Chandrehe was no doubt related to the fact that the monastery itself was established as an outpost of a larger Kalachuri royal center. According to the inscription affixed to its veranda, the monastery was built in AD 973 by the head guru of the monastery at Gurgī, a sage named Prabodhaśiva, who intended it to accompany a temple established a generation earlier by his spiritual teacher and predecessor, the guru Praśāntaśiva (fig. 5.6). However, the monastery, as it stands, represents not the first moment of monastic occupation, but rather a later formalization of a monastic presence that had already been established for at least a generation. The inscription more specifically details the construction of a quiet hermitage, by Praśāntaśiva, "at the foot of the Bhramara hill that is covered with *priyāla* trees and that is situated at the confluence of the Son River."[20] The confluence noted in the text can be identified with a spot not far

FIG. 5.6.
Overview of the monastic site, c. AD 950–973. Seen from the west, Chandrehe. Photo ©AIIS.

from the monastery where the holy Son meets its southern tributary, known as the Banas River. Standing there still today are a few small shrines, which overlook the confluence from the east and the west (figs. 5.7–5.9). That the temple standing next to the monastery was likely attributable to Prabodhaśiva's predecessor, Praśāntaśiva, is indicated by the presence of a short pilgrim's record dating to AD 949, or at least a generation before the monastic dwelling.[21]

By situating his āśrama in a rural location rather than in an urban center, the guru Praśāntaśiva intentionally created a residence on the outskirts of society—either as a place for occasional spiritual retreat or as a permanent place of retirement, where he might live out the rest of his life quietly, while training students in meditation and the attainment of liberation. However, Praśāntaśiva was not simply an ascetic who had severed ties with the world. Not only was he the direct disciple of the first Mattamayūra guru to prevail over the monastery at Gurgī, he was also actively engaged in expanding the scope of the Mattamayūra network. He established a retreat at Chandrehe and enlarged the scope of the monastic ambit at Gurgī, by building a new Śiva temple and a shrine to the north of the temple and monastery established under Yuvarājadeva I; he also built another āśrama for sages at the holy pilgrimage city of Vārāṇasī (modern-day Banāras).[22]

All three of Praśāntaśiva's new commissions appear to have been intended as ascetic retreats, accessible at varying distances from the monastic center at Gurgī. The new temple and shrine that he built to the north of Yuvarājadeva I's monastery at Gurgī may correspond to a small Śiva temple that still stands along the bank of an artificial pond, over half a mile (1 kilometer) to the north of the Gurgaj temple mound (fig. 5.10). Scattered in the landscape around it are many sculptural



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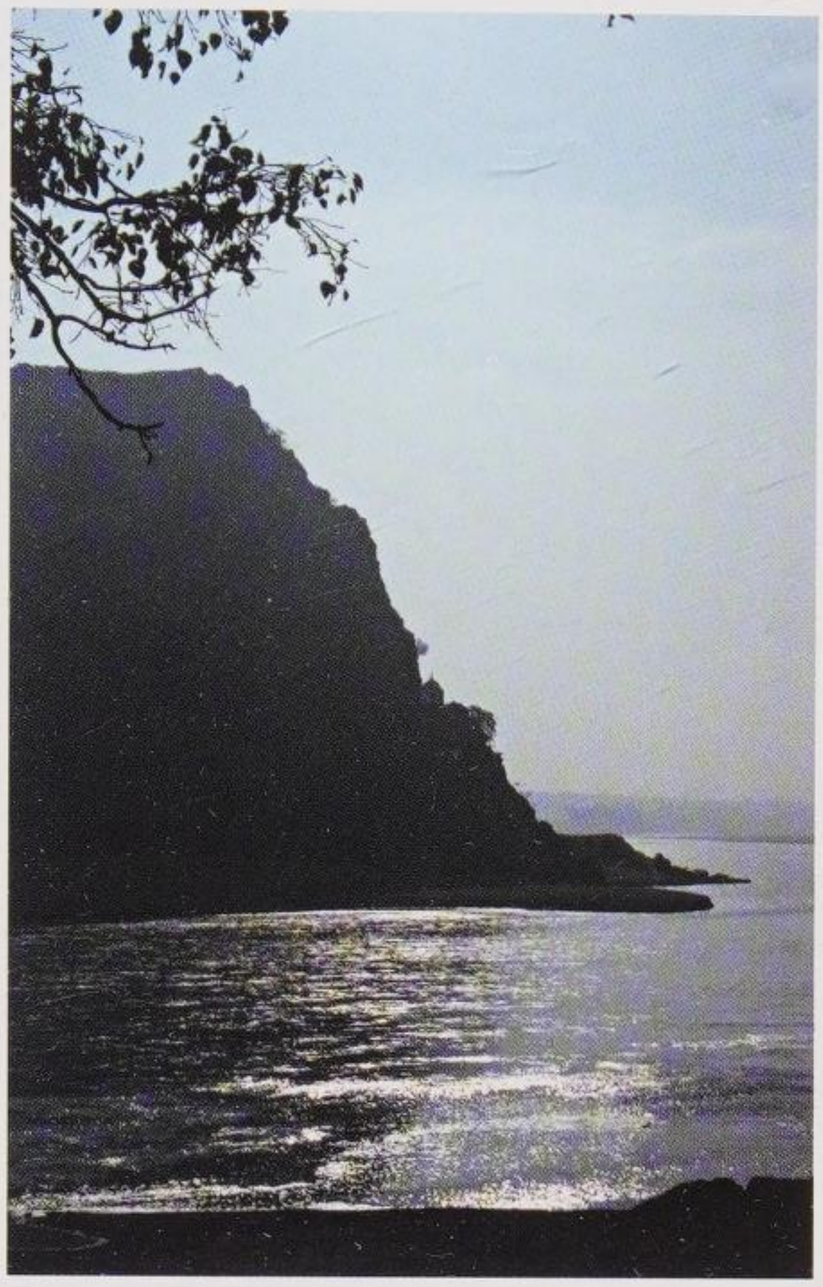


FIG. 5.7.
Map of monuments at Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.8.
View of the confluence of the Son and Banas rivers near Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.9.
Late medieval and modern icons installed in a shrine overlooking the confluence of the Son and Banas rivers. Chandrehe.

fragments, some of which may have belonged to the temple. According to the verses, the temple was adorned with images of the goddess Umā, an Umā-Maheśvara (Śiva conjoined with the goddess Umā), and a six-faced Kārttikeya, situated either in accompanying shrines or niches on the temple wall. The entire complex was surrounded by an enclosure wall with a gateway flanked by Gaṇapati (Gaṇeśa) and Sarasvatī. The significance of this grouping of deities, described in the inscription at Gurgī, has been noted by R. N. Misra as resonating with passages from the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* directing Śaiva Siddhāntins, in particular, to worship precisely the same set of deities: Śiva, the goddess (Śakti), Kārttikeya, Sarasvatī, and Gaṇeśa.[23] At Vārāṇasī, the hermitage, which is referred to as an "abode for practicing austerities (*tapasthāna*) on the bank of the heavenly river (Gaṅgā)," was established "for the absolute rest of those who are intent on living in a holy place."[24] And finally, the retreat at Chandrehe was described as "another abode for the *siddhas* on the bank of the Śoṇa; [where] tranquil Yogins, who have destroyed the fetters of impurity [through the performance of daily rites] and who have attained clarity of mind through meditation, reach the goal of final emancipation."[25]

While Praśāntaśiva's activities at Gurgī and Vārāṇasī can be easily understood in terms of their significant geographies, Chandrehe's appeal may have been most

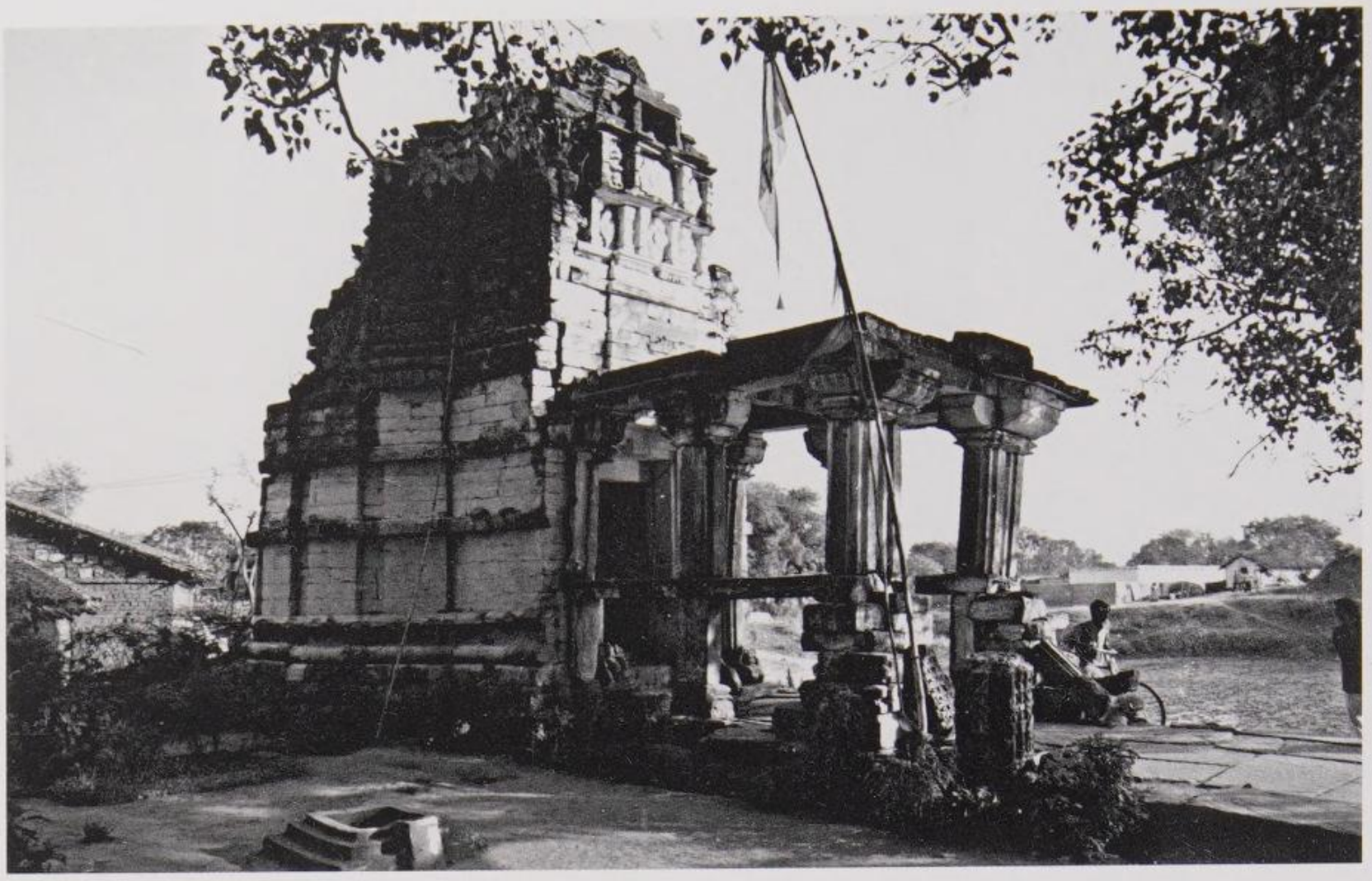


FIG. 5.10.
View of the Śiva temple, c. AD 950. Seen from the northwest, Gurgī-Masaon.

immediately felt in its natural landscape. The arable tracts and rocky hillocks around the Son and Banas rivers offered an appropriately peaceful and sacred setting, already ripe with the qualities necessary not only for subsistence but also for the making of a new holy tīrtha, where the presence of the divine was strongly felt. Rivers, and particularly the confluence of two or more bodies of water, were especially sacred. The Son itself was considered particularly so; it functioned as the principal southern tributary of the holy Ganges River, and it also found its source at Amarkaṇṭaka, another major tīrtha patronized by the Kalachuri kings.[26] Because of its status as a holy river flowing from one pilgrimage site to another, the choice of location may have been as much pious as pragmatic; simply put, Chandrehe was situated solidly within a network of well-connected places.

The significance of this geography for a traveler in medieval India could easily be missed today, on account of shifting demographics in the postcolonial era and the disinvestment of royal princely states after independence. Once part of the princely state of Rewa, modern-day Chandrehe is located deep in the rural hinterlands of the Siddhi district of Madhya Pradesh and may seem comparatively less accessible than it was in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The 31-mile (50-kilometer) journey by road from Rewa requires a two- to three-hour ride through mountainous terrain, followed by a boat trip over the Son River and a short hike through the village to reach the monasteries. However, modern geographies are not always commensurate with ancient routes, as Chandrehe is situated only 15 to 19 miles (25 to 30 kilometers) south of Gurgī and Rewa, if traveling in a straight path. The holy Son River itself may have formed a natural route that moved through the various tīrthas, settlements, and urban centers that were located along the river and its tributaries. In addition to moving southward toward Bilhāri and then Tripurī, the northern route along the Son would have brought the traveler closer to Vārāṇasī, where the guru Praśāntaśiva had notably also established a second hermitage.[27]

FIG. 5.11.
View of the Śiva temple, c. AD 950. Seen from the southwest, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.12.
View of the maṇḍapa and sanctum of the Śiva temple, c. AD 950. Seen from the west, Chandrehe.

Although Chandrehe likely retained ties to these larger networks, it appears to have functioned as a relatively remote site—a retreat, rather than a monastic center—at least during Praśāntaśiva's tenure. Even the temple was a modest structure that may have been conceived primarily for ascetic use. In comparison to the monumental temple that was likely established at Gurgī, as at larger Kalachuri royal religious arenas, the temple at Chandrehe was relatively small and simple in plan, consisting of only a single portico (maṇḍapa), vestibule (*antarāla*), and sanctum (*garbha-gṛha*) (fig. 5.11). Both the interior and exterior surfaces were extremely sparely rendered, even in comparison with the other surviving Mattamayūra sites. Particularly notable was the absence of figural imagery, even in places where it would normally be expected, as on the temple walls and the sanctum door (fig. 5.12). The one exception to this rule was on the *śukanāsa*, or the portion of the temple tower directly above the vestibule marking the transition between the entryway and sanctum (figs. 5.13, 5.14). The śukanāsa was adorned with several elaborately sculpted friezes, consisting of a band of elephants, a carefully articulated half-wall, and sets of sages situated in niches. At the very top, along the temple's front face, was a culminating band of diamond-lotus medallions surmounted by a finial pediment (udgama). The only distinctive deity depicted in figural form on the exterior was found in the presence of an outward-looking head and torso,

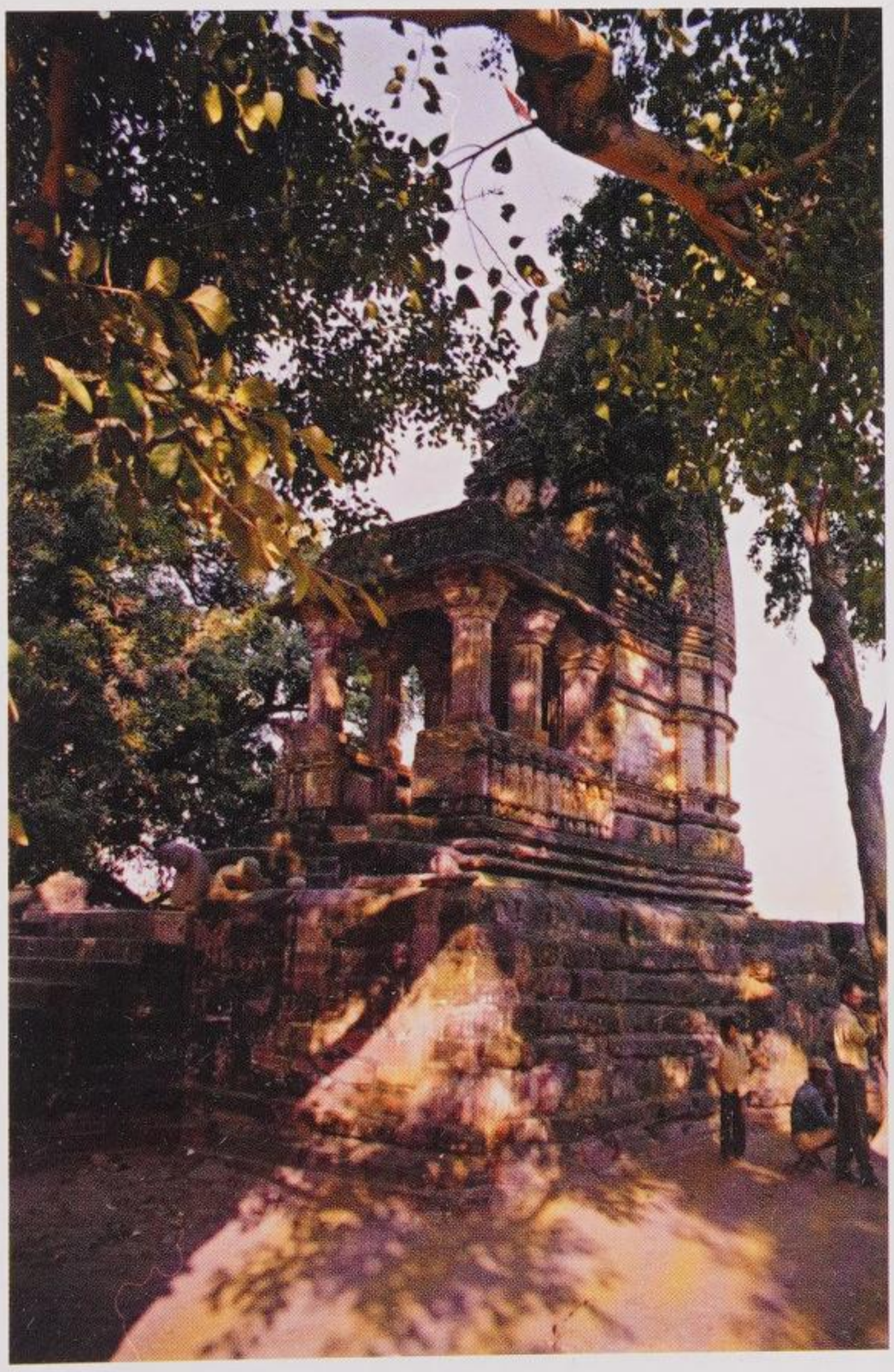
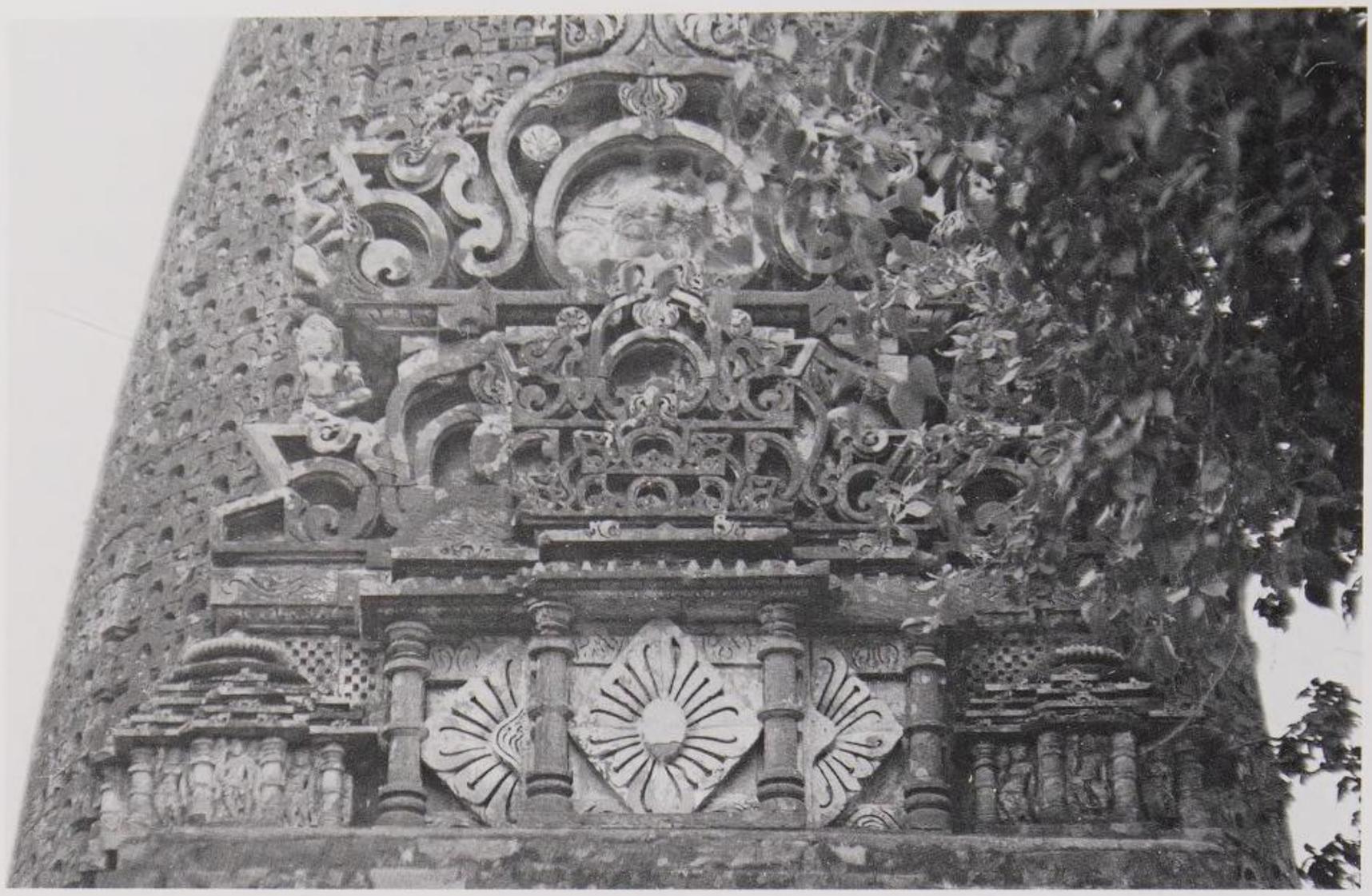


FIG. 5.13.
View of the temple śukanāsa, c. AD 950. Seen from the west, Śiva temple, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.14.
View of the śukanāsa, c. AD 950. Seen from the north, Śiva temple, Chandrehe.



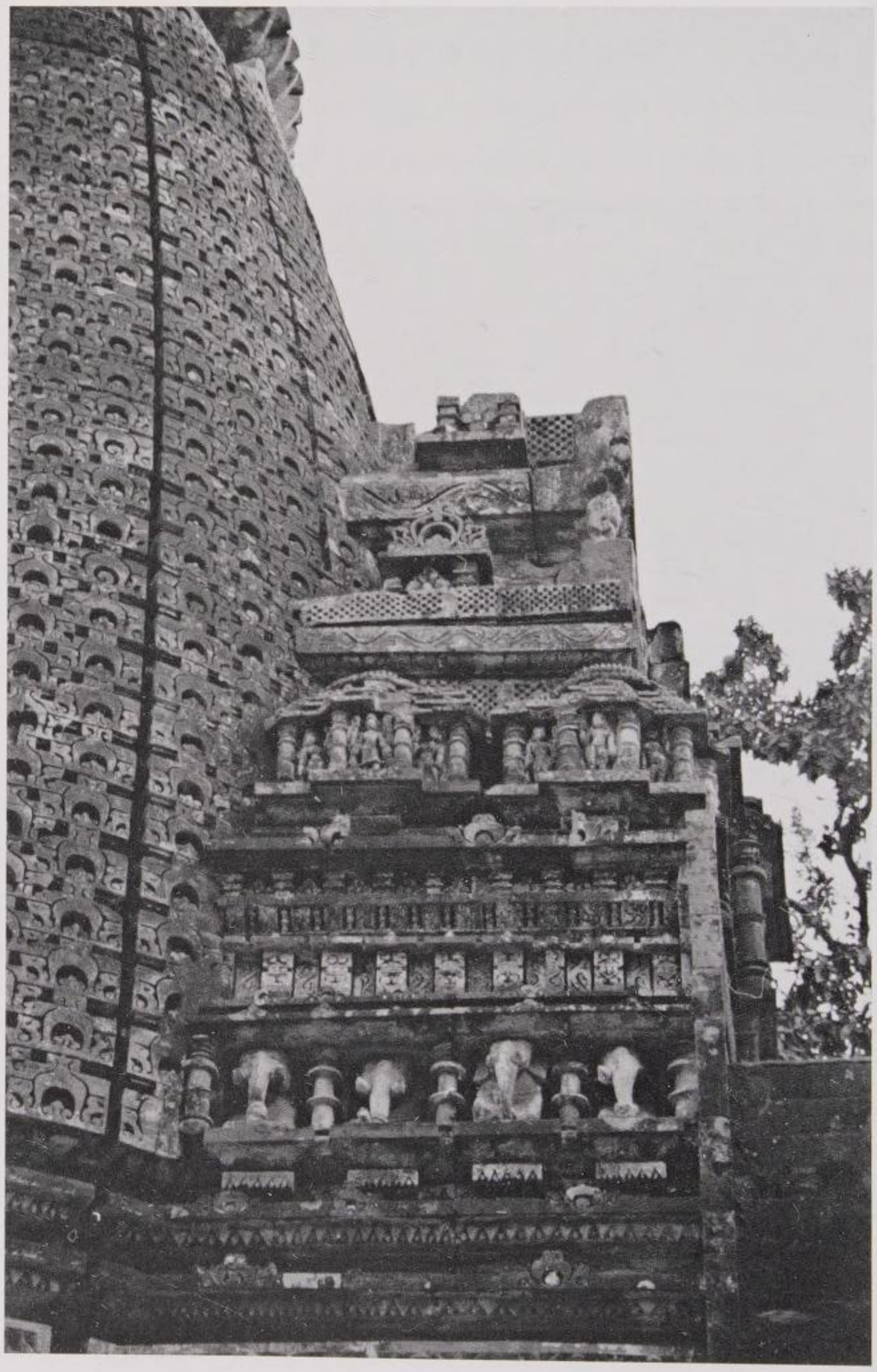


FIG. 5.15.
View of the liṅga enshrined in the sanctum, c. AD 950. Seen from the west, Śiva temple, Chandrehe.

identifiable as the god Śiva, that was situated in a moon-window (*candraśālā*), facing forward from his position at the center of the udgama pediment.[28]

As at other Mattamayūra sites, Chandrehe's temple faced west and housed an icon of the god Śiva in his most abstract yet potent visible form, as a nonanthropomorphic liṅga seated on a pedestal shaped like a yoni (fig. 5.15). But it is there that the comparisons with its contemporaries begin and end. The temple at Chandrehe differs greatly from other tenth-century temples at Mattamayūra sites. In scale, the temple itself is far more in keeping with ninth-century shrines, like those built beside the earliest phases of the hermitage at Terāhī, than with the tenth-century temples at Surwāyā and Kadwāhā. One might argue that the humble size of the temple plan and the deliberate absence of excessive sculptural imagery was well suited for the purpose of an ascetic retreat, in full contrast to the expansion of lay devotion signified by similar developments at sites such as Surwāyā and Terāhī. Nonetheless, the tall platform endowed Chandrehe's temple with a sense of grandeur, despite its modest scale.

Although the temple at Chandrehe diverges from both its predecessors and contemporaries further west in Gopakṣetra, at the same time, it forged a more local

connection with the new Śiva shrine on the outskirts of Gurgī-Masaon. Both were of an unusual type seen only rarely in North and central India: circular in plan and only minimally adorned, with figural sculptures appearing only at the level of the śukanāsa. And both were nearly identical in their dimensions. Likely built within decades of one another and commissioned by the same sage, the guru Praśāntaśiva, these may represent a new architectural innovation at two sites that seem to have functioned as ascetic retreats. At Gurgī, this small temple would have provided a fitting contrast to the larger, royally sponsored temple that once stood at the site of the Gurgaj mound, just about half a mile (1 kilometer) to the south. At Chandrehe, the simplicity of form may have been similarly cultivated as a signifier of ascetic repose, belied only by the height of its platform, its elegant vertical proportions, and the sheer quality of its few sculpted bands.[29]

If Praśāntaśiva's original āśrama at Chandrehe, likely established around c. AD 950, was a humble forest hermitage, then the construction of the monastery in AD 973 by his successor, Prabodhaśiva, marked a significant transformation (fig. 5.16). Described as "lofty and spacious" in the inscription, it was a monumental, two-storied structure built out of large blocks of stone around a central courtyard. With ground floor dimensions of 77.1 by 69.2 feet (23.5 by 21.1 meters), the monastery literally took over the earlier temple site and turned the earlier hermitage (āśrama) for ascetics into an institutionalized monastery (maṭha), permanently rendered in stone, despite its remote locale. Although the temple built by Praśāntaśiva at least twenty-five years earlier remained the tallest monument at the site, the monastery was significantly larger in size and would have dominated the site through its sheer horizontal mass. When its second story was still standing, its vertical dimensions would have approached those of the temple.

In addition to building the new monastery, Prabodhaśiva undertook a number of new projects to improve the overall infrastructure of the site. The most significant of these were associated with water, presumably with the intention of better supporting ritual life around the temple and monastery as well as establishing accommodations for long-distance travelers and growing local communities. According to the inscription affixed to the monastic dwelling, Prabodhaśiva was credited with refitting his predecessor's well, which "had collapsed and filled with fallen wood," with new heavy stones; he excavated a new large water tank or artificial reservoir, described as "a sea-like lake, by the side of the mountain," and constructed an additional well.[30] Another crucial improvement was the construction of a new road "through mountains, across rivers and streams, and also through forests and thickets," made "by the process of excavating, breaking and ramming heaps of large stones."[31] Such structural changes to the areas around the maṭha went far beyond the basic requirements for a monastic residence; instead, they suggest that the guru Prabodhaśiva was actively building roads and bridges in order to make the site more accessible to a range of visitors and may, in fact, highlight the significance of the site's geography in relationship to larger routes. The allusion to excavating a road through mountains and across rivers seems to suggest, in terms of real geography, the mountainous terrain and river landscape to the north, between Chandrehe and Gurgī (see figs. 5.2, 5.8).

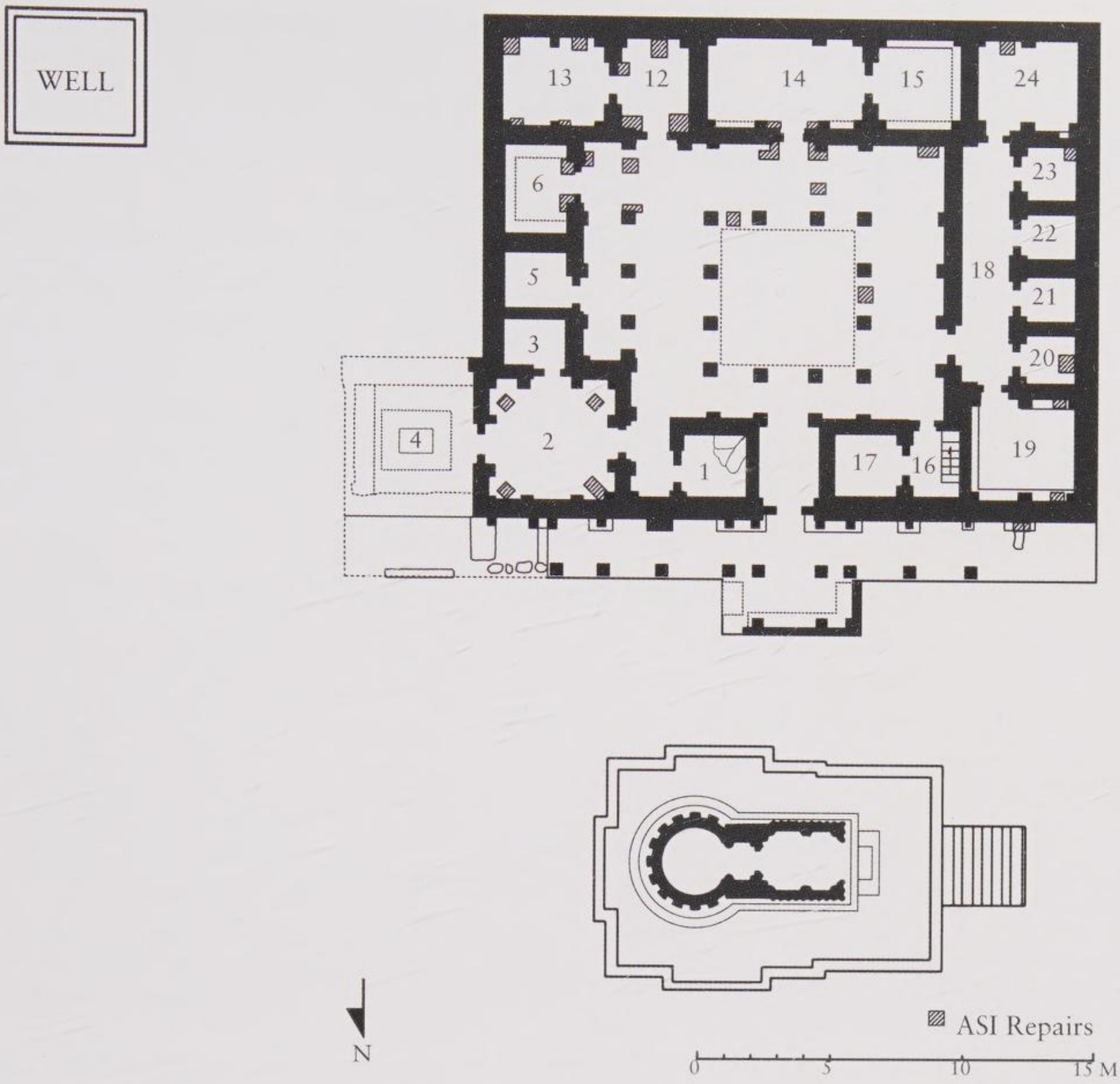


FIG. 5.16.
Plan of the monastery, c. AD 950–973. Chandrehe.

The extent of architectural activities at Chandrehe, particularly during Prabodhaśiva's tenure, would have required a significant amount of financial support, which strongly implies Kalachuri royal involvement. Although there is no direct evidence for patronage by specific Kalachuri agents, the inscription at Chandrehe includes many verses that carefully and consciously link the Mattamayūra lineage to the Kalachuri kings, and particularly to the Kalachuri king Yuvarājadeva I, who established the maṭha at Gurgī.[32] Chandrehe's close proximity to Gurgī, which remained an active center of Kalachuri-sponsored Mattamayūra activity, may also have been an important factor in its establishment as a new monastic center; as the Mattamayūras grew increasingly influential within the Kalachuri kingdom, sites such as Chandrehe may have become crucially important in reinforcing the networks that connected rural locations with larger urban centers like Gurgī. Given that much of Kalachuri territory was administered through the gifting of land grants to various religious institutions, it is likely that the monastic community was a landholding institution with a measure of economic control over the surrounding areas.[33]

The extensive degree of building activity at Chandrehe suggests that even if it remained a fairly remote hermitage, it likely also functioned as a critical point of

junction. The changes in the overall infrastructure may be related to the social and economic development of territories in the periphery of the Kalachuri kingdom, as roads were certainly required for access, and tanks and water sources were critical not only to daily religious life, but also to agrarian expansion in rural areas.[34] Unfortunately, there is little evidence for the degree of settlement seen at sites such as Terāhī and Kadwāhā. Rather, it is more likely that Chandrehe continued to serve as a companion to the monastery at Gurgī, just 16 miles (25 kilometers) away—as an educational enclave and place for retreat, and possibly as a key stop in a larger transit zone that moved north and south along the Son River. At the same time, the monumentality of the building and the sophistication of its program, as will soon be discussed, seem to express the expectations not of an isolated community of ascetics, but rather of a head guru who was rooted in more than one place. Prabodhaśiva may have continued to preside over the monastery at Gurgī, while also overseeing the workings of a number of peripheral retreats. In this sense, Chandrehe may have formed part of a much more complex network, which extended from the Kalachuri capital to larger centers, each of which may have formed the key node overseeing a cluster of newly formed rural retreats.

Marking the Monastery as Sacred Architecture

By AD 973, the monastery and the temple stood side by side, providing two distinct yet related foci for ritual activity. Whereas the temple centered on the deity residing within its sanctum, the monastery's meaning derived from its function as a residence for the holy guru and a group of disciples actively engaged in potent ritual activities. At Chandrehe, even more than at any other Mattamayūra monastic site, the monastery's status as a sacred space was rendered explicitly not only through its highly formalized spatial organization, but also through its carefully orchestrated sculptural program, which drew attention to particularly potent portions of the building's plan. The high level of integration between the monastery's visual and spatial programs, especially given Chandrehe's rural locale, attests to how much the institutionalization through royal patronage may have contributed to the formalization of the Mattamayūras' monastic world.

The complexity of the monastery was built up from the moment of approach. As in the case at every other Mattamayūra monastic site, the monastery's front entrance was along the northern facade, which stood overlooking the tall temple platform just a few feet away (fig. 5.17). However, the facade itself represented a new innovation, formulated by artfully combining a range of earlier features. Following the model of the hermitage, seen in the earliest phases of Ranod and Surwāyā, the vast span of the facade was conceived of as an open veranda (fig. 5.18). Midway along the veranda was a sizable projection, which emphasized the north–south axis and framed the point of entrance. Yet unlike at sites such as Kadwāhā and Terāhī, at Chandrehe, this projection was neither an entryway nor a front portico, but rather a fully enclosed area surrounded by a half-wall. It was thus a semipermeable rather than a fully penetrable space, allowing visual access to the entrance rather than direct passage (fig. 5.19). The rest of the veranda appears

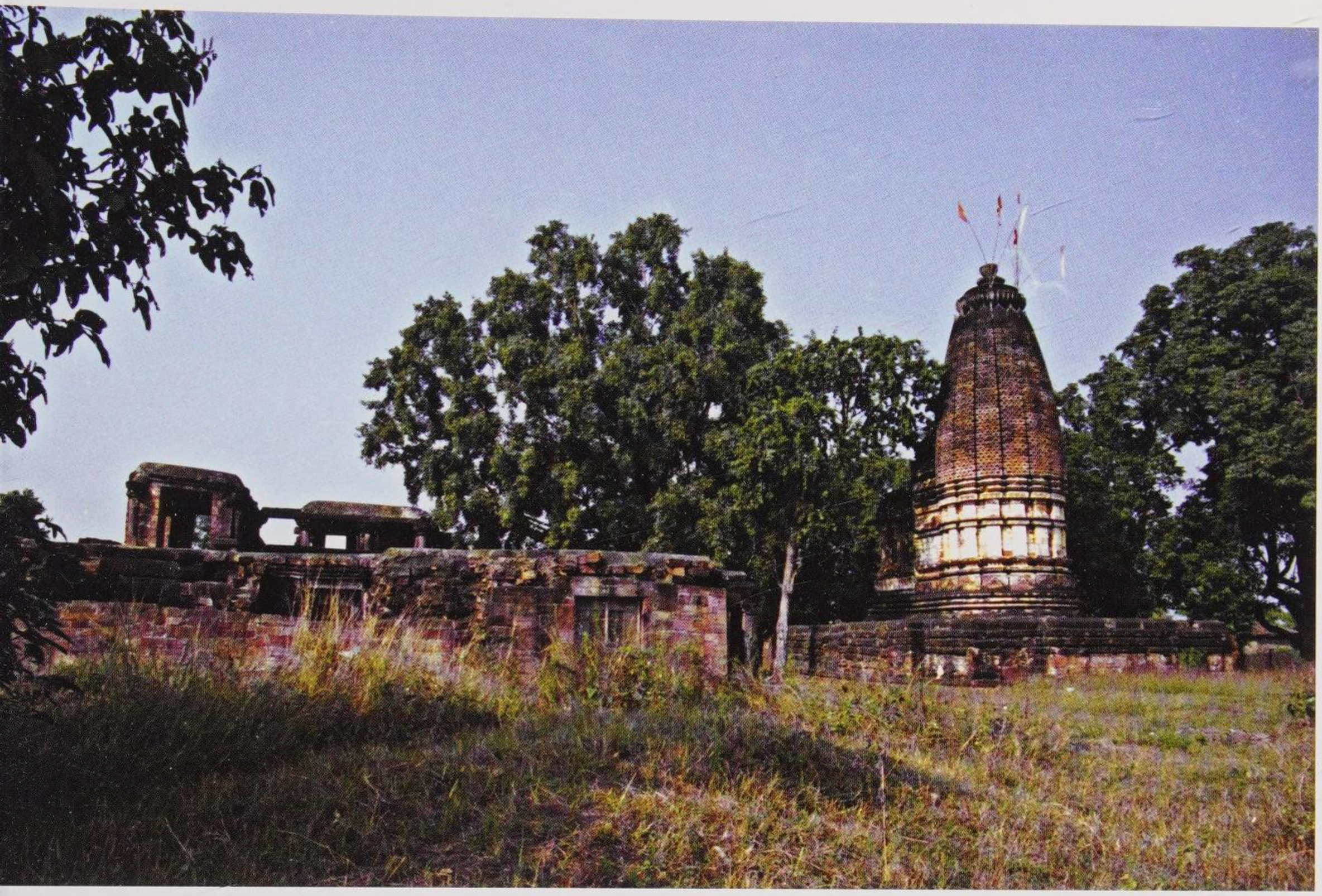


FIG. 5.17.
View of the monastery and temple, c. AD 950–973. Seen from the east, Chandrehe.

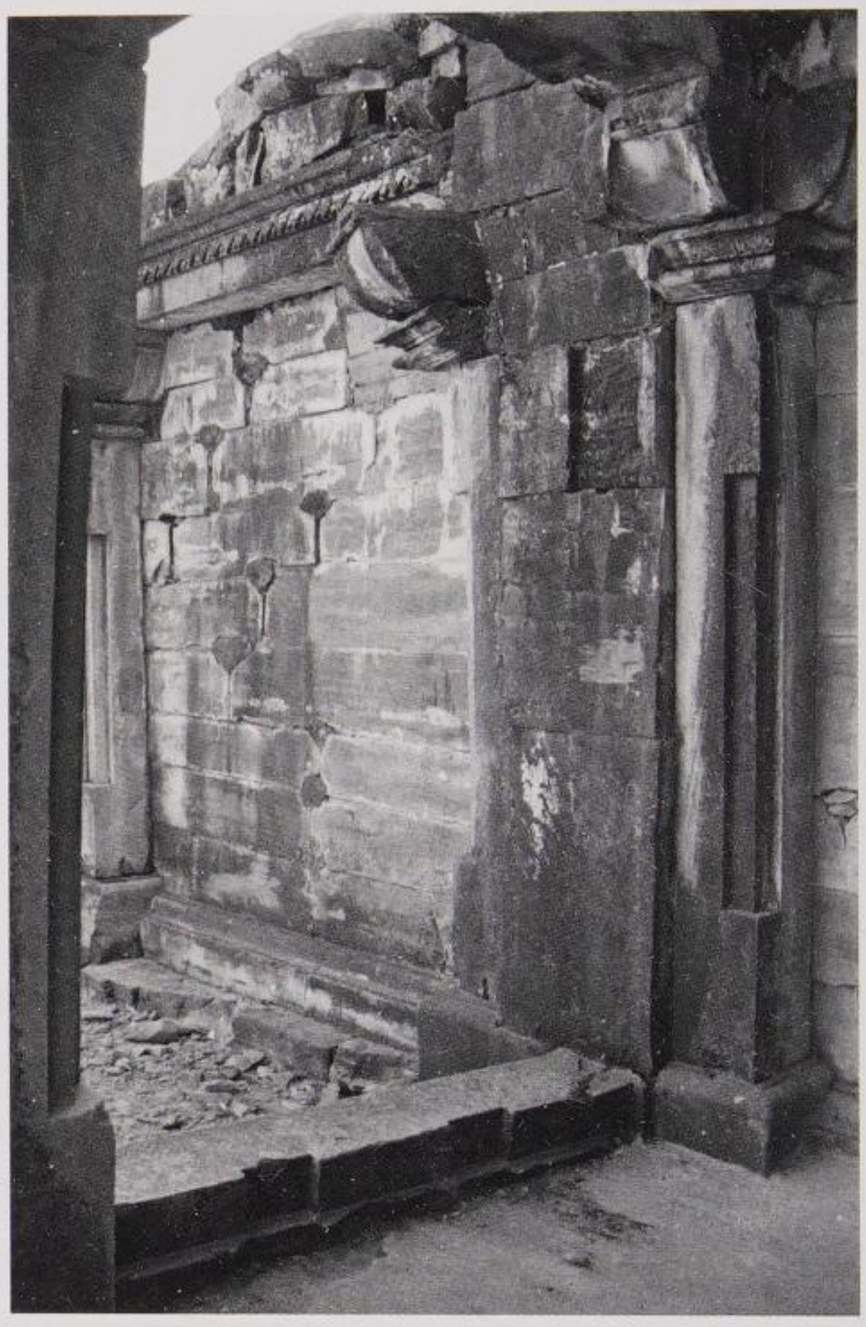
to have remained open, with the exception perhaps of two additional small rooms that once occupied the east and west corners of the veranda, as evidenced through their remaining doorsteps (fig. 5.20).

In addition to situating the monastery as both an interiorized center and an airy forested retreat, the facade engaged in a close dialogue with the nearby Śiva temple, built a generation earlier, not only through proximity, but also through its form. As at sites such as Terāhī, the half-wall surrounding the central projection was carefully sculpted following the style of the temple's maṇḍapa, with alternating bands of swirling foliate motifs in the recesses between projecting pilasters that had similarly patterned vase-of-plenty motifs (figs. 5.21, 5.22). In the vocabulary of medieval Indian temple architecture, this type of ornamentation signified an open-pillared hall, the ideal of a wooden architecture rooted in the forested wilderness.[35] In both cases—of temple and monastery—the semipermeability of the front hall gave way to the solid enclosure and interiority of the building beyond. The dialogue between temple and monastery, cultivated through ornamentation and proximity, was also carried through in a play in pillar forms, and particularly in the pointed use of a mixed (miśraka) type of pillar in the veranda's central projection—in contrast to the more moderately defined rucaka pillars and pilasters used in the remaining spaces. As in the case at Kadwāhā, seen earlier in the book, the shift in pillar type established the central projection of the veranda as a functionally and

FIG. 5.18.
View of the front veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.19.
View of the central projecting bay of the veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the southeast, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.20.
View through the remains of a doorway, situated at the east end of the veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the northwest, monastery, Chandrehe.



symbolically distinguished space, one that appropriately moved outward to engage and visually frame the nearby temple.

The projecting portico and its associated seating area did more than just frame a view of the temple; it also defined the space through which the monastery itself was entered. Here the orientation was exactly as at Terāhī, where the temple portico and the monastery's main entrance were perfectly and axially aligned. In this case, it is worth noting that the indirect entrance through the sides, rather than the center, of the monastery's veranda may have been deliberately intended to achieve a number of effects. On the one hand, it may have avoided the problem of violating prescriptions in architectural treatises against the creation of axial entrances into buildings intended for brāhmaṇas, as noted in earlier chapters.

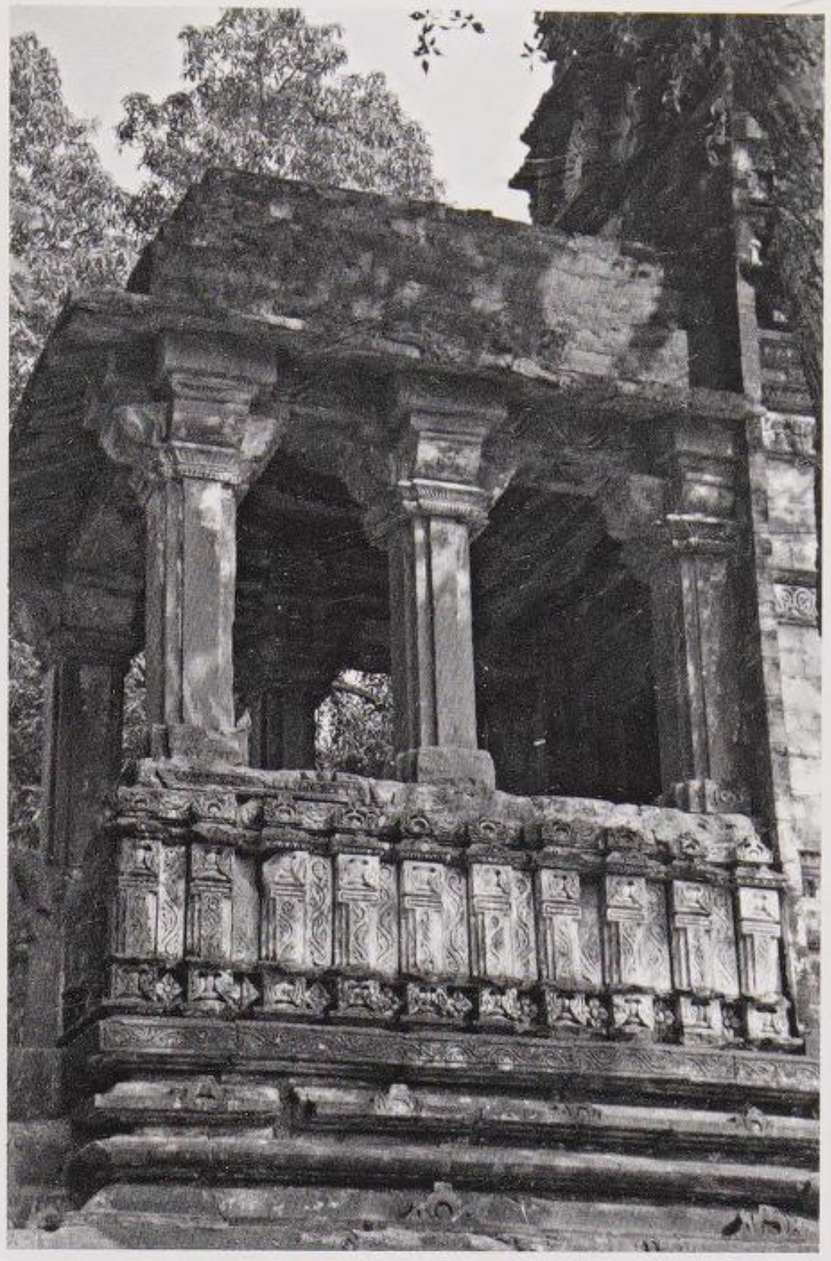


FIG. 5.21.
View of the central projecting bay of the front veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the northwest, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.22.
View of temple portico (maṇḍapa), c. AD 973. Seen from the south, Śiva temple, Chandrehe.

On the other hand, it necessitated movement along the veranda in an east–west direction that not only ran parallel to the pathway leading into the temple, but also took the visitor directly past the two-part inscription that flanked either side of the monastery's main door.

The actual entrance to the monastery was through an elaborately sculpted doorframe that, more than at any other surviving monastic site, firmly reinforced the notion of the monastery as sacred architecture (fig. 5.23). The iconographic program and format of the doorframe set into the entrance followed conventions more commonly associated with temples, in order to immediately mark the space that followed as inherently sacred. In temple architecture, the doorframe preceding entrance to the main sanctum was traditionally ornamented with standard sets of divinities that fulfilled two distinct functions. The first was primarily auspicious and apotropaic: the doorway was the final threshold separating the space of the exterior world from the temple sanctum. The second was to signify the specific identity of the deity enshrined within: the figures depicted on the doorframe both marked the temple's sectarian affiliation and acted as a projection of the deity's presence from within. In tenth-century temple architecture, the standard program often included elaborately sculpted figures of the sacred river goddesses Gaṅgā (that is, the Ganges) and Yamunā on the lower doorjambs, where they stood flanked by attendants and protective guardians. The images displayed on the upper lintel of a temple doorframe were reserved for deities of a higher order. The central panel (lalāta-bimba) was the most important, as it marked the primary cultic affiliation. In a temple to Śiva, it usually contained an image of the god himself, sometimes accompanied by his consort. Supporting him on either corner of the lintel would most often be Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

FIG. 5.23.
Main entrance at the center of the veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.24.
Śiva as Naṭeśa (detail), situated at the center of the door lintel of the main entrance from the veranda, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.25.
Goddess and adoring sages (detail), situated at the corner of the door lintel of the main entrance of the monastery, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

At Chandrehe, the doorframe utilized the vocabulary more commonly associated with temple architecture, in order to mark the monastery as a sacred dwelling permeated by the god Śiva. In the center of the lintel was, more specifically, an image of the god Śiva in a very specific form known as Naṭeśa, or "lord of the dance" (fig. 5.24). The form of Śiva as cosmic dancer was particularly powerful, because it signified the cyclical process of cosmic creation and dissolution—or, in other words, the birth, death, and rebirth of the cosmos—enacted through Śiva's dance.[36] Inscriptions and other sources often link Śiva's dance to the Hindu notion of saṃsāra, or the cyclical process of birth (creation), death (reabsorption into the universal godhead), and rebirth. Although the image at Chandrehe is partially broken, it is still possible to make out the curve of upper back and neck and the bend of the god's legs, as Śiva remains in a state of perpetual movement. His face remains peaceful, yet a human skull is affixed to his staff (khaṭvāṅga), to remind us of the potential for destruction.[37]

While the image of Śiva as Naṭeśa marked the monastic residence as a sacred space, other iconographic elements called attention to the significance of ascetic practice. Flanking Śiva on either corner of the door lintel were female divinities, each accompanied by a pair of ascetics kneeling in devotion at her feet (fig. 5.25). Emaciated and clad in loincloths, with their matted locks of hair heaped high, these ascetics clasp their hands as they worship the goddesses before them. These images,

FIG. 5.26.
Front entrance hall, c. AD 973. Seen from the south, monastery, Chandrehe.

incorporated into the visual vocabulary of the doorframe, created a potent analogy between temple and monastery. If the temple functioned as a space that localized divinity, the monastery was also permeated by the presence of Śiva, actualized by the rituals performed by the ascetics residing within.

Even at the level of iconography, the form of Chandrehe's entryway carries special weight, not only because of Naṭeśa's particular power, but also because of the connections with contemporary developments at other Mattamayūra sites. At Surwāyā, Chandrehe, and Kadwāhā, also in the mid-tenth century, Śiva Naṭeśa was the prime deity adorning a similar position, in the center of a door lintel, marking entrance not into a monastery but into the sanctum of a temple, as noted in the previous chapter. At those sites, he was accompanied on either side by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, who occupied the corners of the lintel and who, together with Śiva, represented the complete cycle of existence. At Chandrehe, the iconography seems to suggest a different meaning, one that was more closely aligned with acts of ascetic practice. At the same time, the sheer quality of the sculpture, which conformed to that of a broader regional style, connected it with elite Kalachuri patronage.[38] What is particularly striking at Chandrehe is that, in contrast to the monastery, the doorframe preceding entry into the temple sanctum remained completely unadorned. In this sense, the monastery may call attention to the transformation from ascetic retreat to worldly monastic institution. Whereas the temple was built for a remote community of ascetics, the monastery brought the site more firmly into the ambit of the larger royally sponsored network.

The Architectural Program of the Interior

The building that opened up through this elaborate entrance was one that had to accommodate a wide range of activities—from the mundane necessities of eating and sleeping to the performance of ritual worship and the guru's daily lessons. Following a short entrance hall was the large, open courtyard that served as the heart of the building (figs. 5.26–5.28). At Chandrehe, both the form and format of the courtyard were reminiscent of those seen at larger monastic centers, such as Kadwāhā. Not only was the courtyard the best-lit, largest, and most easily accessible space within the monastery, but it also functioned as the organizational center of the building. The hub of two intersecting cardinal axes that divided the monastery into four equal quadrants, it was also a transitional zone,

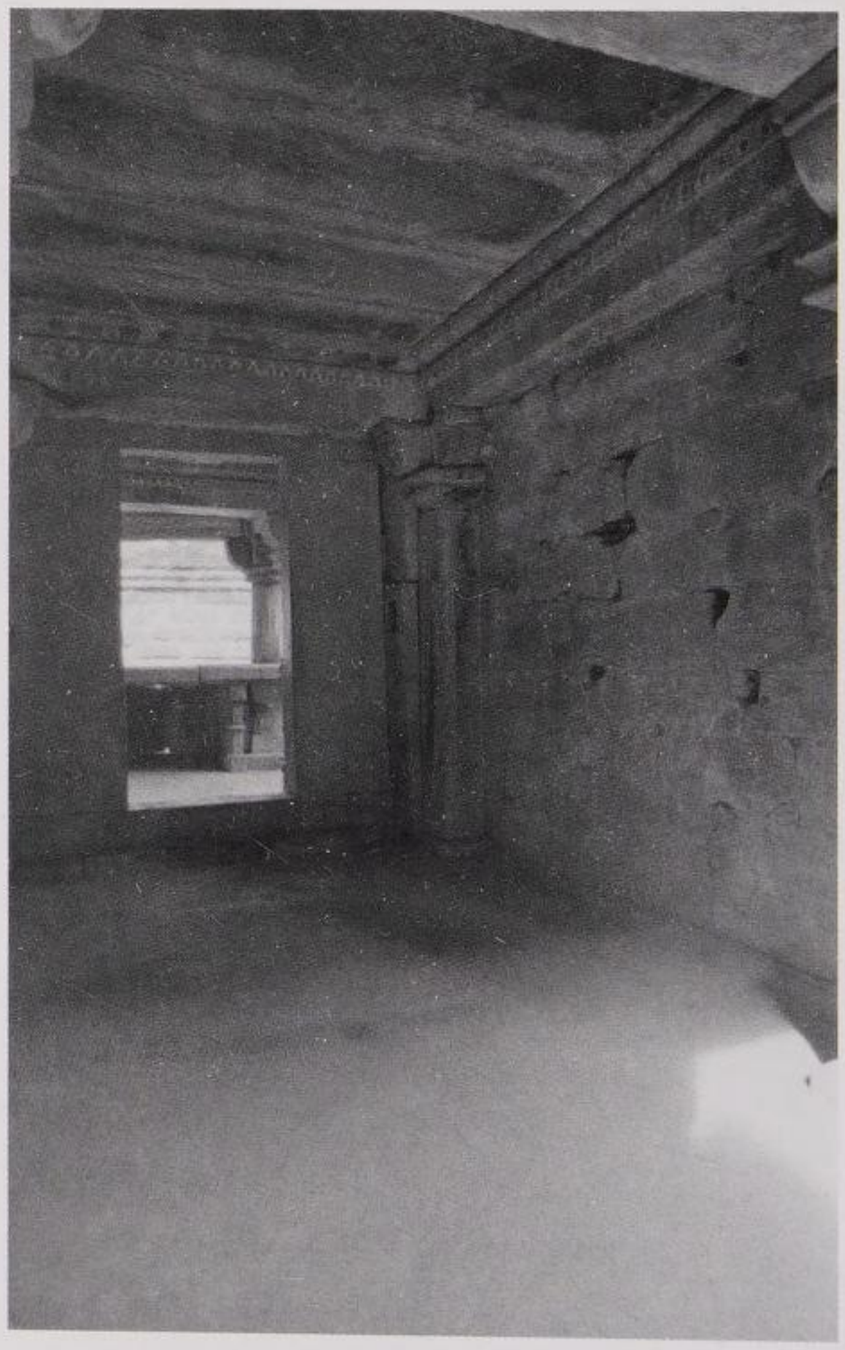


FIG. 5.27.
Central courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.28.
Central courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from above and from the northwest, monastery, Chandrehe.

or the space through which one must have passed in order to move from one set of rooms to another.

The importance of the courtyard was reinforced visually less through a shift in pillar type, as seen at other sites, than in the embellishments at the level of the entablature. Above the corrugated stone eave (chādya) rose a set of eight elaborately sculpted celestial figures (*vidya-dhāras*), each of which projected forward, as if flying effortlessly above the open interior space (fig. 5.29). Not merely ornamental, these figures were also functional, designed as drain-spouts to facilitate the flow of rainwater into the recessed court below. At the level of

FIG. 5.29.
Drain spout shaped as a celestial figure in the courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

iconography, these figures may have transformed the courtyard into a heavenly realm. In sculptural reliefs, of both contemporary and earlier eras, such celestials frequently hovered above the heads of gods and divine sages, trumpeting their fame and holding garlands over their heads. Here at Chandrehe, they may have particularly resonated with the verses of the inscription affixed to the monastery's entrance, which tell that the fame of the monastery's maker, the guru Prabodhaśiva, was sung "continuously with delight, and in a high tone" by the heavenly gandharvas and vidya-dhāras residing in Indra's celestial gardens.[39] During the rainy season, one might imagine the spectacular sight of these flying celestials, carved of stone but seemingly weightless, with water flowing through their mouths, trickling to the ground in sounds that may have mimicked the high tones of the singing celestials. At the level of their sheer artistry, these figures may have also acted as indexes of elite patronage, marking the monastery as a space where the heavenly and worldly could come together.

The lower story of the monastery functioned primarily as an extended ritual zone, with only the exception, perhaps, of a group along the western wing (Rooms 19–24) (figs. 5.30, 5.31). Set along a separate corridor (Room 18)—which was entered through a small door set inconspicuously near the northwestern corner of the courtyard—the group consisted of four small, cubical cells flanked by two larger rooms on the north and south sides. In his 1931 assessment of the monastery, R. D. Banerji suggested that the cells were "in all probability reserved for those ascetics, who were not inclined to mix with their brethren and desired seclusion for meditation without disturbance."[40] The smaller ones were analogous in size and form to cells known to have been used as bedchambers in Buddhist monastic architecture. The larger ones could have functioned in a variety of ways, either as chambers for individual meditation or as classrooms. However, another possible function may have been as a rest house for those who were stopping at

Chandrehe on the way to other places. Set off from the ceremonial rooms to the east, the western wing was slightly more secluded and yet still part of the ground story of the monastery, which was more likely, as has been seen at other sites, to have functioned as a more easily accessible zone within the monastery.

By contrast, the rooms that extended to the south and east of the courtyard were both easily accessible and elaborately conceived. Among these, three rooms, or sets of rooms (Rooms 6–8, 11, and 14–15), were distinguished as spaces for specialized ritual activity, through the application of elaborately sculpted doorframes that set them apart from the rest. Banerji, who saw the monastery as containing "two classes of chambers,"[41] suggested that whereas the rooms with unadorned doors may have functioned as dormitories, school rooms, or libraries, the others functioned as "chambers for gods," marked as such "by the presence of figures of gods on the lintels of their doorways."[42] While I agree with Banerji's observation that the elaborately sculpted doorframes mark the rooms that follow as ritual spaces, I do not believe that all of them can be understood to have contained an icon of a deity. Rather, a closer examination leads to the conclusion that they were likely designed to accommodate particular functions necessary for the sustenance of the monastic community. In addition to being distinguished visibly through iconography, each sculpted room set was positioned in a distinct spatial unit within the larger plan

FIG. 5.30.
View of the doorway leading to the wing to the west of the courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the east, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.31.
Western wing, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.32.
View of the doorframe marking the entrance to Room 6, c. AD 973. Seen from the southwest, monastery, Chandrehe. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 5.33.
Niche flanking the entrance to Room 6, c. AD 973. Seen from the south, monastery, Chandrehe.

of the monastery. Variably accessible from the courtyard and differently conceived, each of these room groups seems suited for a unique purpose.

The first set of specially marked rooms dominated the northeast corner of the building, and it is the only group likely to have been built as a shrine (Rooms 6–8).[43] Deeply set within a dark corridor, sequestered away from the rest of the building, this group was technically the most inaccessible of the group, but it was nonetheless the most gloriously conceived. It was endowed with a full set of figures on the lintel and door jambs and flanked by a small embellished niche, surmounted by a sculpted pediment (udgama) (figs. 5.32, 5.33). At the center of the lintel was the elephant-headed god, Gaṇeśa, seated cross-legged on an embroidered cushion decorated with a lotus pattern, and accompanied by his rat attendant (vāhana). In his four hands, he held a lotus, a discus, a battle-ax, and a bowl of sweets. The two corners to the left and right were occupied, respectively, by the goddesses Durgā, holding a lotus and water jar (*kamaṇḍalu*) and offering a hand gesture of benediction (the abhaya mudra, or "fear-not," gesture), and Sarasvatī, holding her characteristic *vīṇā* (stringed musical instrument) (figs. 5.34–5.36). In this manner, the iconography of the entryway marked the group as a whole as a shrine. However, the sanctum proper was not likely to have been the room directly following the entrance (Room 6), but rather a second chamber that once stood to its west (Room 8) (fig. 5.37).[44]

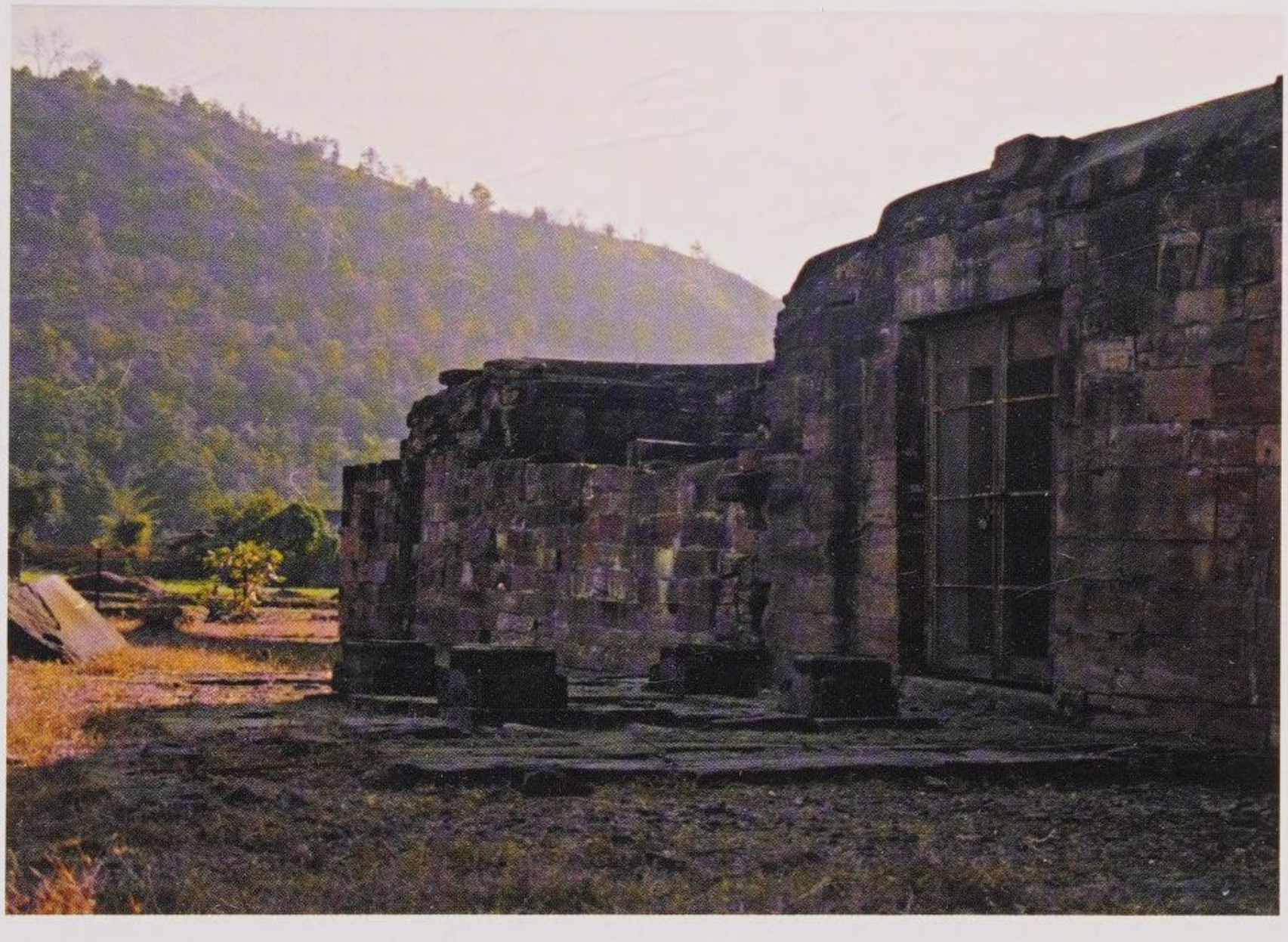
Several details suggest that Room 6 was not in fact a terminal room, but rather a pillared antechamber, analogous to a maṇḍapa, leading to Room 8. The first detail comes from an analysis of the structural support system of the monastery and, in

FIG. 5.34.
Durgā (detail) on the upper-left corner of the door lintel preceding entrance to Room 6, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.35.
Gaṇeśa (detail) at the center of the door lintel preceding entrance to Room 6, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.36.
Sarasvatī (detail) on the upper-right corner of the door lintel preceding entrance to Room 6, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.37.
View of the ruins of Room 8, c. AD 973. Seen from the northeast, monastery, Chandrehe.



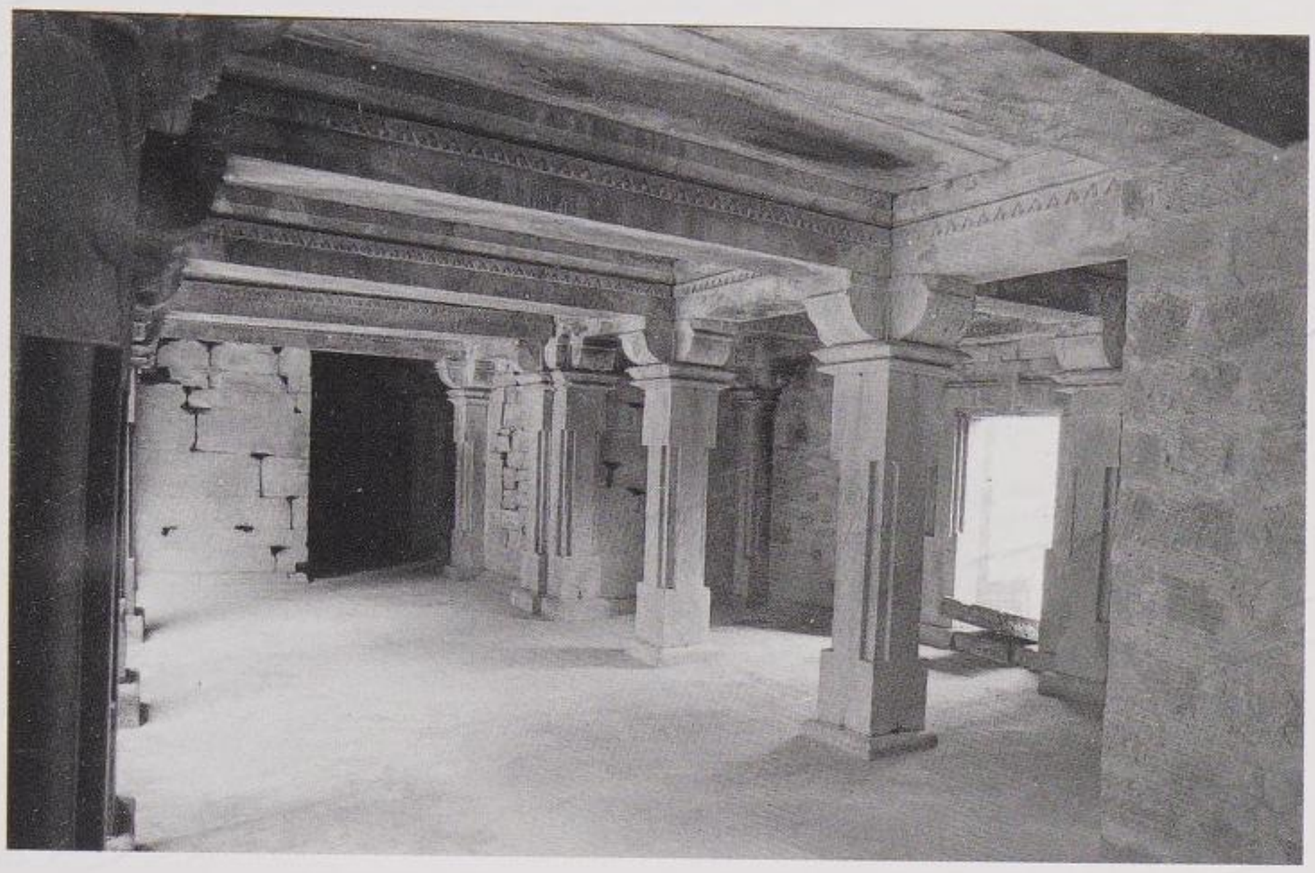
particular, of Room 6. In all other rooms within the monastery, the stone pillars supporting the ceiling fit within a cohesive grid, and the stone beams were laid out at ninety-degree angles. The ceiling and support system in Room 6, on the other hand, followed an octagonal plan, like that seen most often in temple porticos, such as the one leading to the sanctum of the temple at Chandrehe. The second detail follows from an examination of the door-hinge holes on the entrance to Room 8. In my examination of doorway construction at other monastic sites, hinges were

always positioned on the interior of the space that would have followed, in order to enable the door leaves to swing inward. At Chandrehe, the positioning of the hinges on the exterior of Room 6 suggests that the space that followed (Room 8) would have been an interior room rather than an exit to the exterior world. The third detail is the plan of Room 8, which, unlike other rooms in the monastery, appears to have been perfectly square, as would have been expected of a shrine or temple sanctum. Finally, the positioning of Room 7, a small chamber entered through a door in the south wall of Room 6, would have followed the form of a lateral room designated for the storage of ritual implements.[45]

Both the placement and orientation of this group of rooms within the monastery suggest that it was meant not only as a shrine, but also to serve as a monastic counterpart to the temple outside. It was positioned parallel to the temple and may have engaged it visually, as it projected beyond the boundaries of the monastery's eastern wall. It is even possible that the shrine could have been surmounted by a superstructure—as seen, for example, at Surwāyā—although the second story of the building as a whole is too damaged to know for certain. The extension of the probable sanctum, Room 8, beyond the exterior limits of the monastic residence would have solved an architectural problem, ensuring that residential chambers on the upper story did not extend into the space directly above an enshrined figure or icon. The approach through these rooms was linear and direct, as in a temple, but from within the monastery, it was circuitous and perhaps intentionally obscured. Because the shrine was set off along a dark hallway that was not immediately visible from the courtyard, it occupied a liminal zone within the monastery that may have heightened the experience of the approach and intensified its status as a particularly sacred arena (fig. 5.38).

Set in the center of the monastery's southern wing and directly along the north–south axis, the second sculpted doorframe marked a sequence of two rooms (Rooms 14–15) that were extremely visible and easily accessible from the moment of entry. Although a full view of the doorframe has been obscured by conservation work over the past century, the parts that are visible confirm Banerji's observation that the iconography is identical to that of Room 6, and that the lintel features a program almost identical to that preceding the "shrine" in the northeast. It features Gaṇeśa in the center, flanked by the goddesses Durgā and Sarasvatī, all of whom are seated and endowed with their most popular attributes. While the iconography of the doorframe suggests that Rooms 14 and 15 may have been used in ways similar to Rooms 6 through 8, the format of the spaces suggests a different function. Both Rooms 6 and 8 are approximately square in shape, as would be expected of the maṇḍapa and sanctum of a shrine. By contrast, Room 14 was a sizable longitudinal space leading to a smaller, rectangular room (Room 15) (figs. 5.39, 5.40). Although the entrance to Room 14 was on axis with the main entrance of the monastery, movement from Room 14 to Room 15 did not proceed in a linear fashion (as Room 6 did to Room 8), but rather required a turn to the west.

The shape of these two rooms, their overall layout, and their position directly off the center of the courtyard seem far more suited for group or congregational activity than for individual worship. Their most likely function, given what we



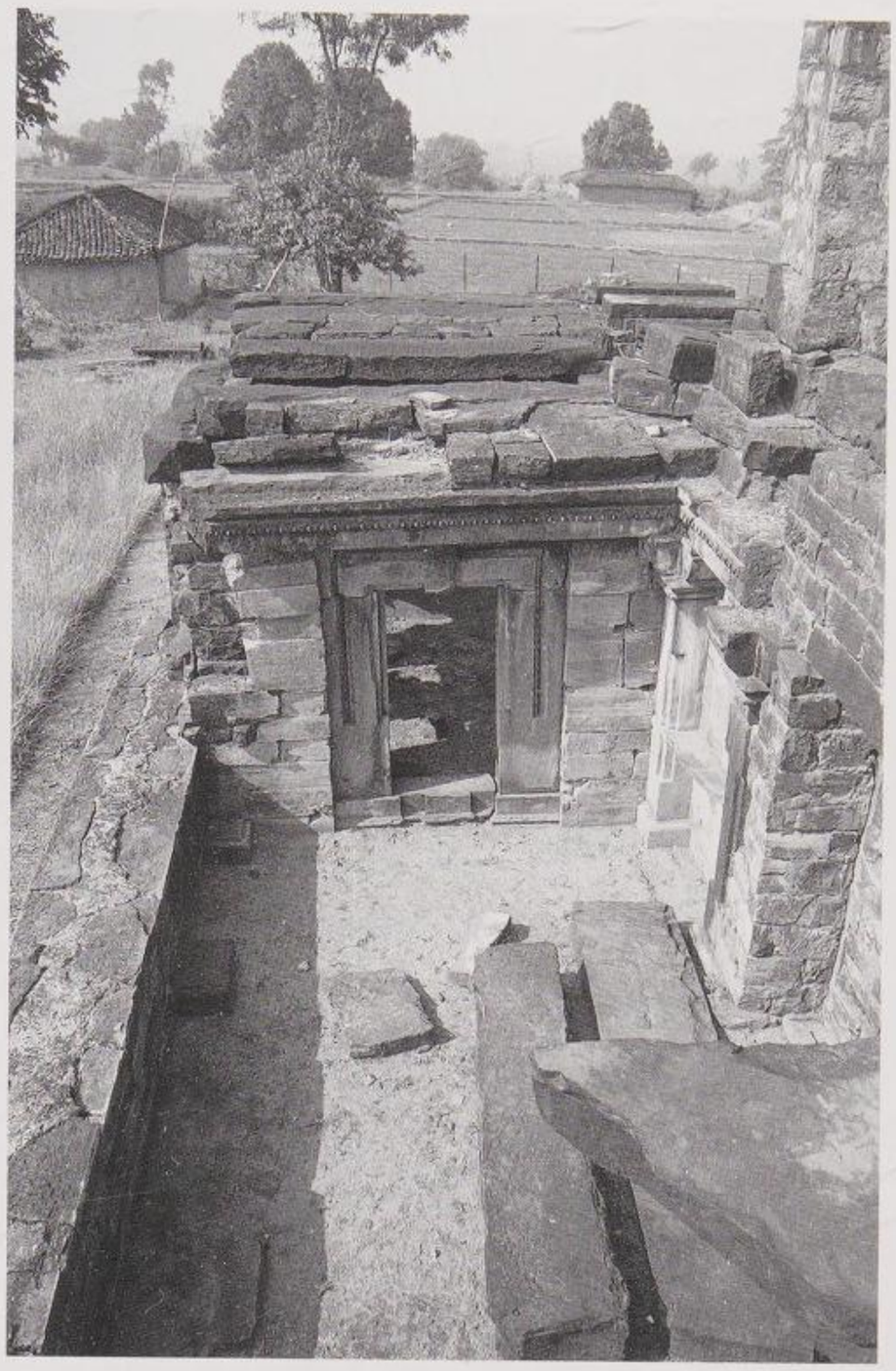


FIG. 5.38.
View of the wing to the east of the courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the south, monastery, Chandrehe.

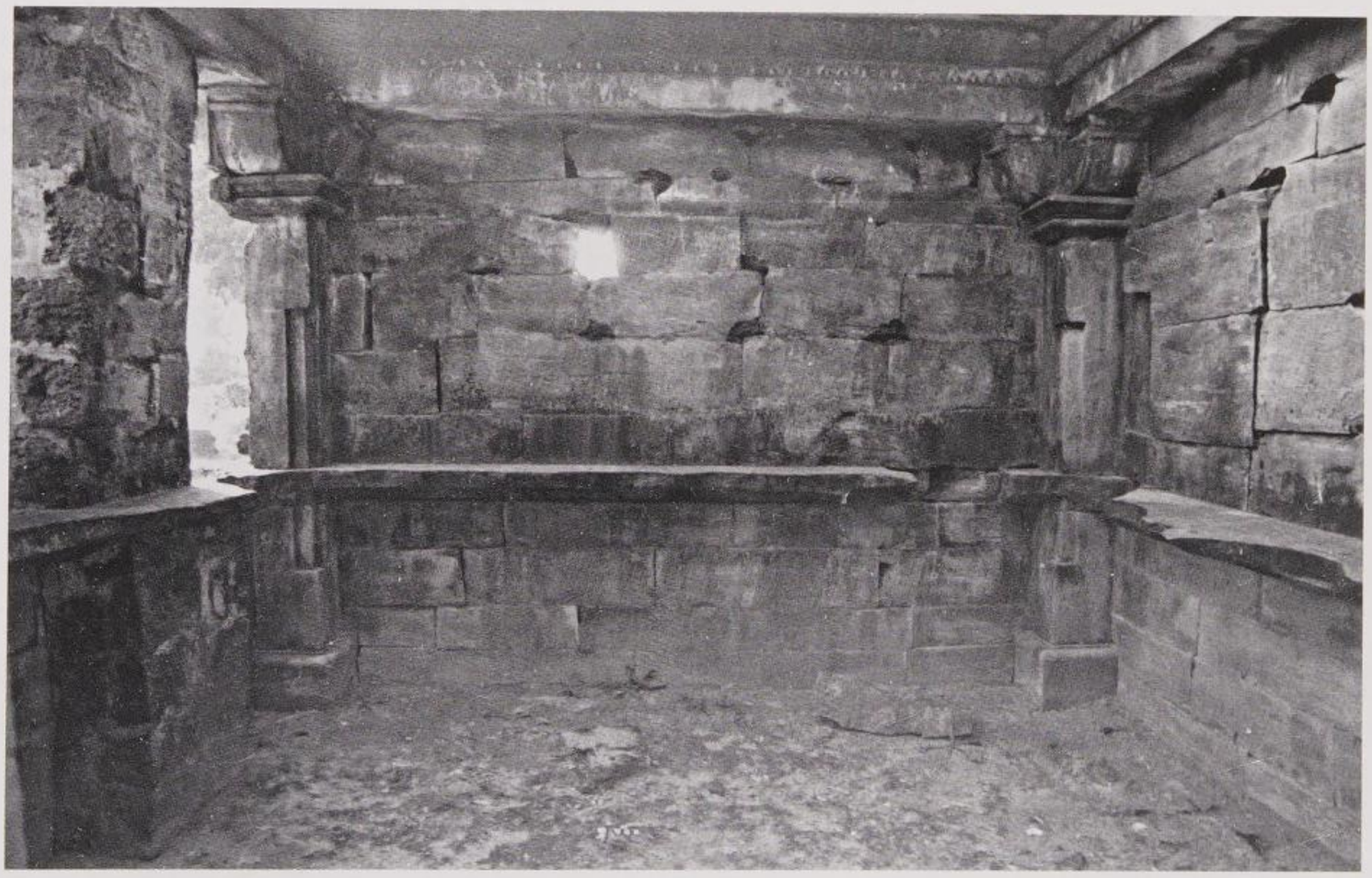


FIG. 5.39.
Aerial view of Room 14, c. AD 973. Seen from the east, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.40.
View of Room 15, c. AD 973. Seen from the east, monastery, Chandrehe.

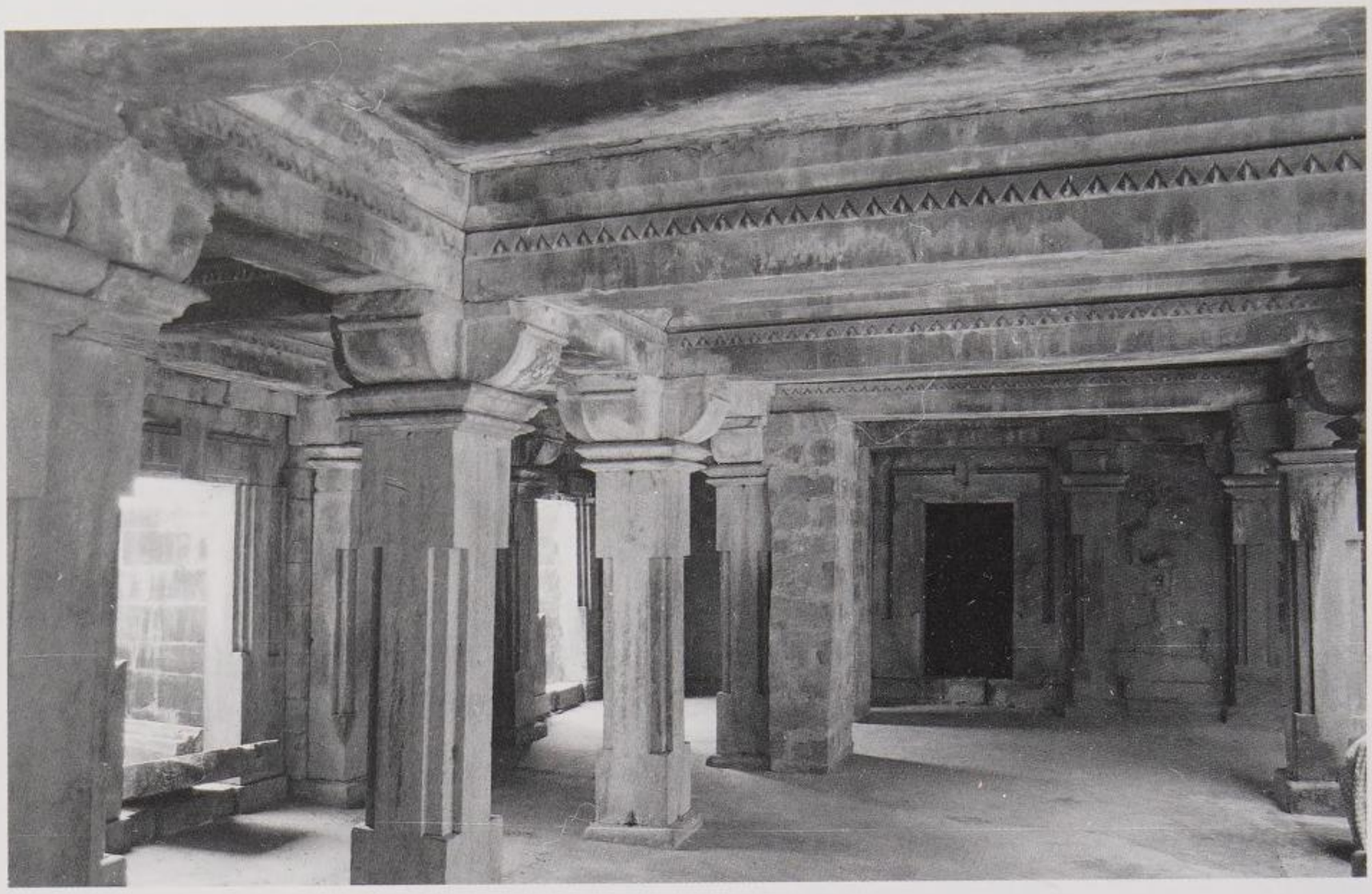


FIG. 5.41.
View of the wing to the east of the courtyard, with a view of the entrances to Rooms 10 and 11, c. AD 973. Seen from the north, monastery, Chandrehe.

know about the shape of day-to-day monastic life, may have been as a locus for the daily discourses of the guru, during which members of the monastic community would gather to hear recitations and commentary of sacred, ritual texts. As a deeply ritual act that began with the invocation of Śiva, Gaṇeśa, and the lineage of gurus, it would seem fitting for it to take place within a specially sanctified set of rooms. One could just imagine the first of the two rooms (Room 14) providing a larger congregational space for group lessons, and the smaller room in the back (Room 15) providing an appropriate space for housing sacred texts and the installation of a vidyāpīṭha, or the sacred seat of knowledge.

The last sculpted doorway marked the entrance to Room 11, a small room tucked away along the eastern wing of the monastery (fig. 5.41). More sparsely decorated than the others, this doorframe carried images only on the upper lintel. However, the iconographic program is of particular interest. At the center, in the spot most often reserved for an image of a divinity, was an ascetic sage or guru, frontally rendered (figs. 5.42–5.44). He wore a loincloth and sported the tall, matted locks of hair that are often associated with Śiva, and he was accompanied originally by two disciples (only one of which still survives) depicted in profile and clasping their hands together in devotion.[46] Although differentiated through posture and hierarchic use of scale, the two were nearly identical in appearance, as if the disciple were attempting to make himself in the image of his guru. As on the other doorways, the guru was flanked by the goddesses Durgā and Sarasvatī, who were situated on the lintel's corners and accompanied by their respective attendants.

In a sense, the program of the lintel constructs the guru as an icon—as a liberated embodiment of the god Śiva—by placing him in the position normally reserved on temple doorways for an image of an enshrined deity. At the same time, all three sets of figures on this particular lintel were depicted in a standing, rather than seated position, a choice that may point to the status of the represented guru

and disciple as active and present. The positioning of this space within the monastery seems to situate it not as a shrine for an icon of a deity, but rather as a room that was more likely associated with the living guru. The room in question was the larger of two chambers standing side by side, with an entrance that extended from an internal veranda (Room 9), which acted as a threshold between the east wing and the square central courtyard.[47] As a result, it occupied a distinct spatial zone that may have served as a main office or chamber of the guru, analogous to Glenn Yocum's description of the oṭukkam as discussed earlier in the book, where the guru might meditate in private or meet with disciples or visitors to the monastery.[48]

The choice of embellishing one lintel but not the other appears to have been deliberate. Whereas the smaller chamber (Room 10) was fairly spare and may have functioned as the place for the guru's own individualized practice, the larger room (Room 11) may have functioned as his meeting room. In his representation on the lintel, the guru holds a manuscript, still visible in his left hand, and his right hand, now broken, may have been raised in a teaching gesture. The interior of the room was endowed with seat-back benches, which could have functioned either for storage or repose, making the space within an ideal location for different kinds of teaching. It is also possible that this room functioned in a different fashion entirely, as either the vidyāpīṭha within which the key texts of the tradition resided, or as a specialized shrine for the lineage of gurus, who may have been represented in the form of sculpted icons.[49] In either case, the representation of a guru at the center of the door lintel may have acted less as a static symbol or icon than as a frame for either the actual living body of the guru, or for the living tradition that was active through the teachings of the then-current guru, who himself was understood as the embodiment of the lineage.

FIG. 5.42.
Durgā (detail) on the upper-left corner of the lintel of the doorway to Room 11, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.43.
Guru (detail), flanked by disciple(s), at the center of the lintel of the doorway to Room 11, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.44.
Sarasvatī (detail) on the upper-right corner of the lintel of the doorway to Room 11, c. AD 973. Seen from the west, monastery, Chandrehe.

Although the original function of these rooms can never be precisely known, they suggest a formal logic to the structuring of ritual within the monastery around the bodily presence and actions of the guru, who served not only as a teacher, but also as an exemplar to be emulated by the resident community of disciples. The notion of acting in emulation of the resident guru was evoked most clearly through the inscription affixed to the monastery. In one verse, the monastery's maker, the guru Prabodhaśiva, was described as "imitating his spiritual preceptor" in his performance of austerities and meditation along the bank of the Son River.[50] Similarly, the continuous stream of the religious tradition, passed down from guru to disciple over the course of many generations, was indicated through the extensive genealogy, laid out in no fewer than ten verses at Chandrehe, that emphasized both the ascetic practice of the resident sage and his power to attract the patronage of kings. The differences in the size, format, scale, and placement of the rooms following the three sculpted doorframes within Chandrehe's monastery makes it possible to reimagine the three sets of sanctified spaces as housing the guru in a variety of roles—as a teacher passing down instruction to a group of students, as a highly skilled practitioner of meditation and yoga, and as an object of devotion who may well have been adored along with other gurus of the lineage, possibly even within the monastery's northeast corner shrine.

The remaining rooms within the monastery appear to have served primarily residential functions. In addition to the rooms along the western wing, described previously, within the ground story alone were a set of two larger rooms, positioned at the southeast corner (Rooms 12–13), and two smaller chambers to the east and west of the main entrance (Rooms 5 and 17). The first group (Rooms 12–13) were entered through the north end of the eastern hall around the courtyard, and, as result, despite their proximity, they remained spatially distinct from the set that may have formed the guru's chambers (Rooms 10–11). Instead, they acted as an independent unit accessible directly from the central courtyard. The rooms to the east and west of the main entrance (Rooms 5 and 17), both of which seem to have served as storage rooms, were also enterable through distinct spatial zones.

The first small room (Room 5) was positioned inconspicuously just across from the internal shrine complex. Although not particularly notable at first glance, it nevertheless remains among the most curious rooms within the monastery because of the presence of an underground vault (fig. 5.45).[51] Accessible only through a break in the floor and currently filled with dirt, this appears to have once been a full room situated below floor level, and its entablature and corner pilaster remain just visible. Local legend has it that this room is the beginning of a secret underground passageway that leads out to the bank of the Son River, but it seems more likely that it functioned as a secret storage space, accessible through some kind of trapdoor.[52] The second (Room 17) was oriented in an equivalent fashion directly opposite the monastery's entry hall, in a similarly secluded location. More specifically, it was just off the stairwell (Room 16) leading to the monastery's upper story, which was itself entered through a small doorway at the northwest corner of the hall running around the courtyard (fig. 5.46). The close proximity of this doorway to the one leading into

FIG. 5.45.
View of "secret" room buried beneath Room 5, c. AD 973. Seen from the northeast, monastery, Chandrehe.

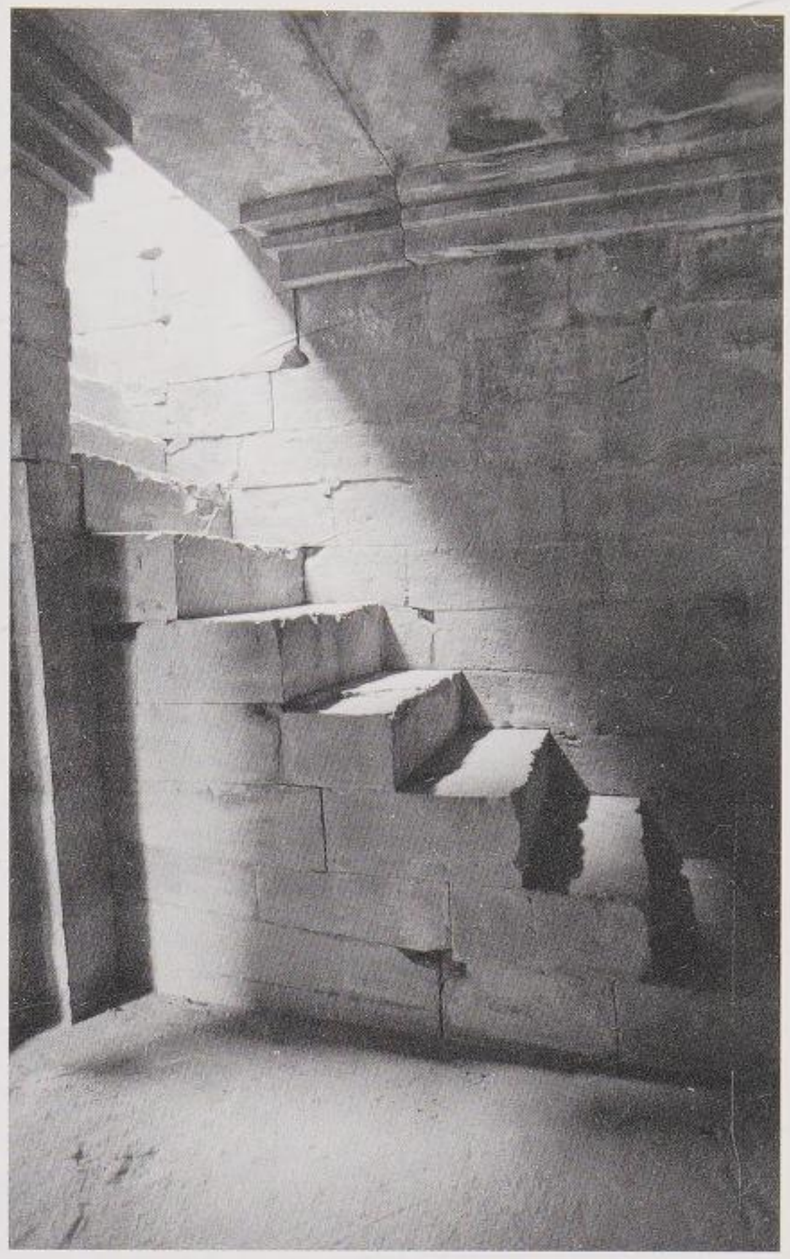


FIG. 5.46.
Staircase leading to the second story, c. AD 973. Seen from the east, monastery, Chandrehe.

the monastery's western wing seems deliberately designed in a way that grouped residential areas together through points of access.

Because it was situated in a separated chamber, the staircase leading up to the second story at Chandrehe was even more secluded than its counterparts at other sites, even as it remained far more spacious and easily traversable. As at other sites, it was located to the west of the main entrance and likely led to the main residential area of the building.[53] Most of Chandrehe's upper story was long gone even before Beglar's and Banerji's times. Still, it is possible that, as at Kadwāhā and Terāhī, it led up to an area that would have preceded a couple of rooms at either corner of the north wing of the monastery, and likely an open balcony extending above the projection at the center of the veranda below. At Chandrehe, this balcony was positioned at the precise floor level of the temple portico, so that the upper story provided a privileged visual vantage point, on direct axis with the portico (maṇḍapa) leading into the temple beyond. The vertical alignment of the monastery's upper story with the temple would have put the resident sages on the same height as the enshrined Śiva liṅga.

What little survives of the rest of the upper story can be summarized as follows. We can still see parts of the hall that would have run around the central courtyard, including a vedikā half-wall and seat-back benches (*kakṣāsana*) to the south and the west (figs 5.47–5.49). The open court was elaborately rendered, with large miśraka (mixed-type) pillars along the edges of the open court. The presence of seat-back benches suggests that the open space was actively in use, either in the daily activities of the resident ascetics or as a visual vantage point for viewing actions occurring below. Traces of only two rooms still stand, at the center of the

FIG. 5.47.
Overview of the second story courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the northeast, monastery, Chandrehe.

FIG. 5.48.
View of the seat-back (kakṣāsana) pillars, second story courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the southeast, monastery, Chandrehe.

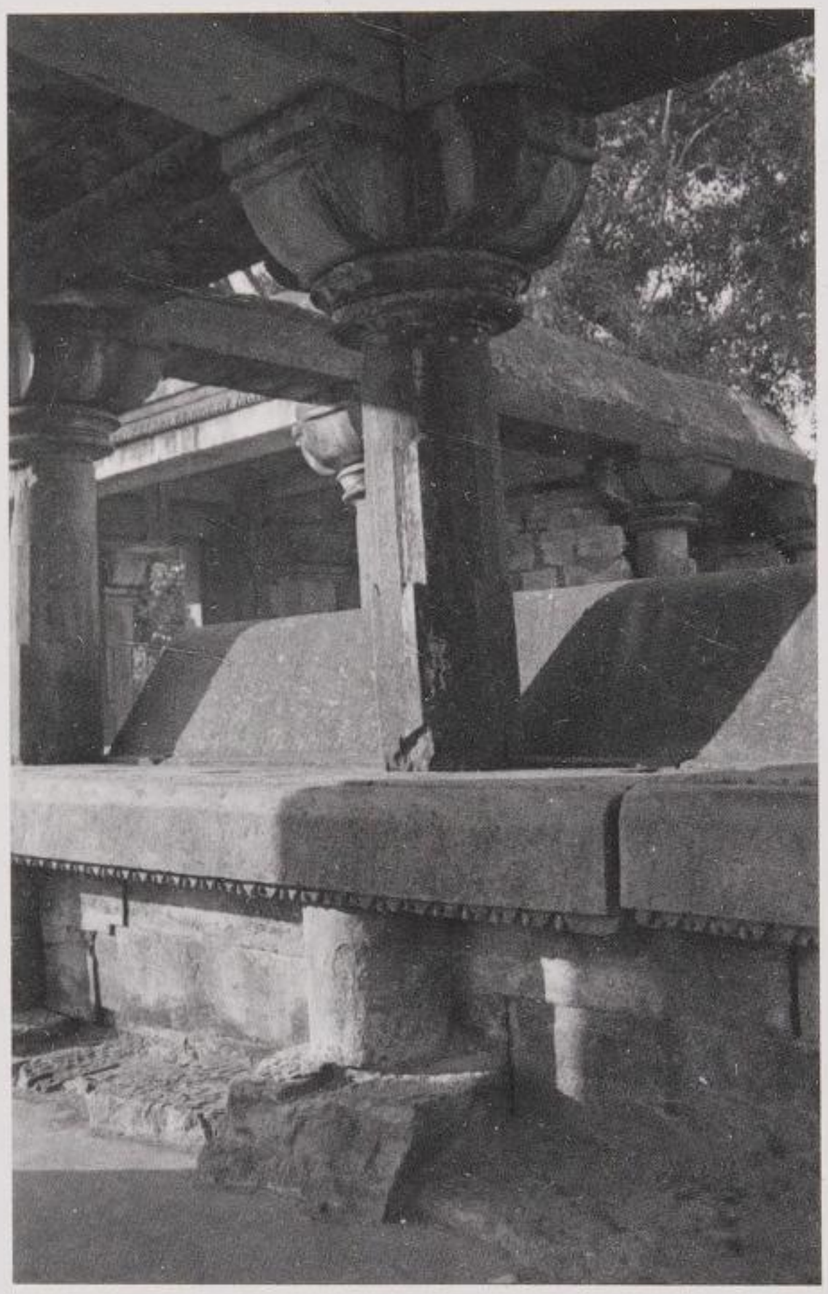
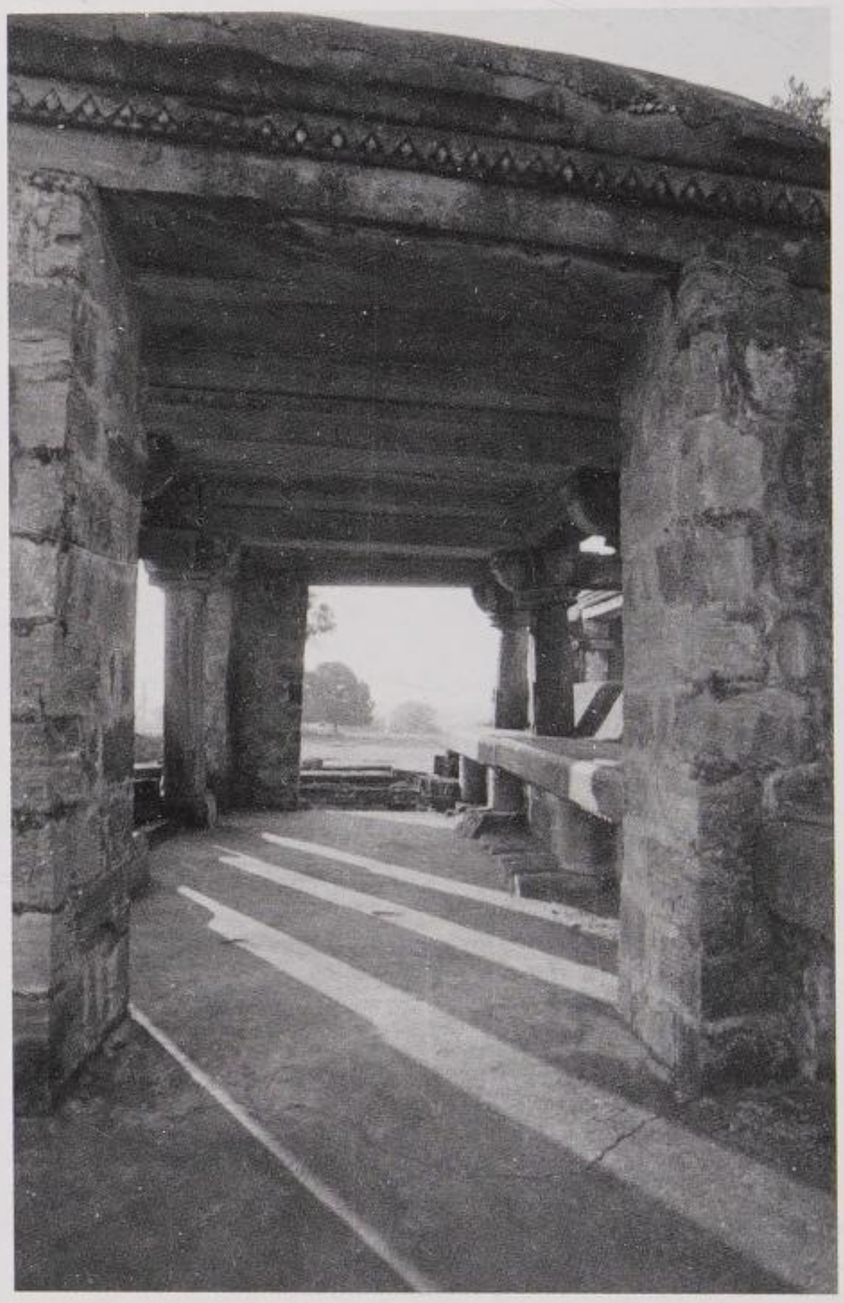


FIG. 5.49.
View of the wing to the south of the second story courtyard, c. AD 973. Seen from the east, monastery, Chandrehe.



south and the west sides of the central courtyard. Fortunately, their doorways remain intact, which allows us to see that they were aligned, as in the case of other monasteries, with the north–south and east–west cardinal axes. Additional foundation markings indicate that the room to the south was relatively small in scale and approximately square in plan, and that the room on the west side would have extended an extra bay to the south, making it roughly equivalent in both placement and relative scale to Room 22 at Kadwāhā.[54]

It is in such spatial analogies that the monastery at Chandrehe represents a culminating moment that brings together approaches to monastic architecture seen in a variety of other contexts. In the open veranda along the front facade, we see an emulation of the model of the monastic retreat, like that at Ranod. Unlike Ranod, however, Chandrehe was located in a river valley cutting through the mountains, seen clearly in a range extending to the south and east of the monastic site (see fig. 5.2). As such, the analogy may well have also been with earlier traditions at Buddhist rock-cut sites, such as Ajanta, which were set more literally within a mountain landscape. However, the semipermeability of the veranda, as at Ranod, illusively masked the impenetrability of the building that followed.[55] The impenetrability then opened up again into the openness of the central courtyard, which, through the use of elaborate ornamental elements, began to direct not only the horizontal movement through monastic space, but also the vertical movement toward the heavens, which were framed by flying celestial figures within the monastery and by the temple standing just to the building's north.

Returning to the Seat of the Rājaguru

At the time of its production, the residence at Chandrehe was by no means the only monastery within the Kalachuri kingdom. The routes between Chandrehe in the far north of the Kalachuri kingdom and the capital of Tripurī in the far south were likely home to many other nodes in the branching monastic networks, not only of the Mattamayūrus, but also of other religious groups that enjoyed Kalachuri patronage—including, most notably, the Pāśupatas and Kāpālikas.[56] In addition to the monasteries at Chandrehe, Bilhāri, and Gurgī, several additional surviving dwellings have been identified within Kalachuri territory. Two are in the present-day Damoh district, at Raneh and Koḍal, in what would have been the middle portion of the Kalachuri kingdom, and the third is to the far north, at the site of Chunari. The wide geographic distribution of these sites suggests that they may have been situated as stopping points on the routes connecting even the farthest reaches of the kingdom to the capital of Tripurī and the seat of the Mattamayūra rājaguru (see fig. 5.1).

Approximately 40 miles (65 kilometers) northeast of Chandrehe, the monastery at Chunari was located along the Kaimur range of the Vindhyas, bordered by the Gangetic plain on the north and the Baghelakhaṇda plateau on the south. Chunari was the ultimate form of ascetic retreat.[57] The monastery itself was tiny, with total dimensions of 36.4 by 24.9 feet (11.1 by 7.6 meters), and it followed the most basic of models, consisting of three identically sized chambers preceded by a veranda. Like other monastic sites, it faced north and was once accompanied by a Śiva temple, the platform of which still stands in front of the building today. Although any foundation inscription that may have existed has long been lost, it is possible that it was approximately contemporary with Chandrehe. A. K. Singh, the archaeologist who discovered the site a decade ago, has suggested that it may have dated to the period of the Kalachuri king Lakṣmaṇarāja II (c. AD 945–970). If this were the case, then Chunari may well

be understood as part of a larger project of establishing monasteries along well-traversed routes in the northern part of the Kalachuri kingdom; indeed, if one were traveling from Gurgī or Chandrehe to Vārāṇasī, Chunari would have fallen along the appropriate path, still marked today by the layout of modern roads.

The monasteries at Raneh and Koḍal, which stand clustered less than 12.5 miles (20 kilometers) apart in today's district of Damoh, were west of Bilhāri and directly north of the Kalachuri capital of Tripurī. Less well documented than Chunari, they are also far more fragmentary. When first noted, in 1904, the monastery at Raneh was fairly small and shrouded in local rumors, which suggested that it had been built by a Chandella Rajput king.[58] As a building, it was, like Chunari, fairly small. It rose up in two stories and had interior measurements of 30.5 by 20 feet (9.3 by 6.1 meters).[59] Koḍal, which has on occasion been confused with the Jain pilgrimage center of Kundalpur, retains traces of what was originally a two-storied monastery, locally known as the Rukminī Maṭha, more elaborately rendered in the vicinity of its original Śiva temple (figs. 5.50, 5.51).[60] While the residence at Raneh appears to have followed the model of the ascetic retreat, the monastery at Koḍal seems to have been formed as an institutional center, and the two may have functioned as a familiar pair. Both were located not far from Nohṭā, a site that has sometimes been seen, on uncertain grounds, as equivalent to the Nauhleśvara monastery mentioned in the Bilhāri inscription.[61] What little is left strongly resembles the patterning seen at other monasteries, and the Śiva temple that stands next to it not only faces west, as in the case of other monastic sites, but also features the figure of Naṭeśa prominently in upper panels of the door lintel and in the moldings above (fig. 5.52).[62] Such iconographic features suggest that this was likely also affiliated with the Mattamayūras, following the model of the institutional center with a satellite retreat located to the north at Raneh.

The resulting network constituted an extensive web of carefully distributed monasteries that connected key places within the Kalachuri kingdom back to the capital at Tripurī, where the presence of the Mattamayūras was felt again through the pairing of monastic centers and ascetic retreats. The center was at the capital of Tripurī itself, where the rājaguru, or royal religious preceptor, was officially seated. The Kalachuri rājagurus at Tripurī are known today primarily from inscriptions dated to the twelfth century, which provide a genealogy of royal preceptors going back to at least the eleventh century. The Jabalpur stone inscription of K 926 (AD 1174–75), composed during the reign of King Jayasiṁha (reigned AD 1163–88), provides a listing of at least eight or nine generations of sages, four of whom are positively connected with specific kings. For example, the inscription lists the guru Puruṣaśiva as having served the Kalachuri king Yāśaḥkarṇa (reigned AD 1073–1123); Śaktiśiva as the rājaguru of King Gayākarṇa (reigned AD 1123–53); Kīrtiśiva as the rājaguru of King Narasiṁha (reigned AD 1153–63); and Vimalaśiva as the rājaguru of King Jayasiṁha. The inscription in question was commissioned more specifically by the rājaguru Vimalaśiva, in order to adorn a Śiva temple that he commissioned in honor of his guru, Kīrtiśiva, and it was likely affixed to the portico of the temple. The exact find-spot within Jabalpur and the specific archaeological context of the inscription's discovery were never recorded. However,

FIG. 5.50.
Overview of the monastery, c. AD 1000. Seen from the northwest, Koḍal. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 5.51.
View of the Śiva temple, c. AD 1000. Seen from the southwest, Koḍal. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 5.52.
View of the door lintel (detail), c. AD 1000. Seen from the west, Śiva temple, Koḍal. Photo ©AIIS.

it seems probable that the temple would have adorned a monastic residence, located either within the direct vicinity of the royal palace or just beyond the capital center, where it may have functioned as an ascetic retreat.[63]

Although no trace of a surviving monastery in or around Jabalpur or Tripurī has ever been discovered, the inscription gives us some sense that it may have been a sizable complex, with distinct official functions that surpassed any of the cases encountered thus far. Particularly notable is the rhetoric of the inscription, which truly emphasizes the worldly functions of the sage. One by one, the gurus in the lineage are praised for their origins as high-caste brāhmaṇas, their knowledge of the Vedas and core orthodox texts, and their vigilance at overseeing royal affairs. The emphasis on caste is particularly interesting, as it signaled the entrance of the Mattamayūra rājaguru into a religious mainstream. The rājaguru Vimalaśiva, the commissioner of the inscription, is extolled for having "made (even) the most distant people pay taxes,"[64] even as he remained "a lotus to the goddess of austerities" and immune to the temptations of Kāmadeva, the god of love.[65] Most importantly, Vimalaśiva and his predecessors are noted as having brought prosperity to the reigns of their respective disciple-kings, a reference that may evoke the range of special rituals designed for royal patrons.

As the rājaguru became incorporated into the retinue of the king's court, he also became responsible for activities that once fell under the purview of the king's

royal chaplain, or rājapurohita, who lived in the palace and who was responsible for performing the full gamut of rituals to ensure the well-being of the king. As already noted earlier in the book, the Śaiva initiation of a king by a guru was only the initial step into a larger ritual world. The initiation was followed by a royal consecration, through which the monarch, as Alexis Sanderson has pointed out, took up the role of becoming the head of the social order established by caste and religious discipline.[66] The consecration was not necessarily a single occurrence, but rather was reenacted—often annually—through rites that included the investiture of power into the king's weapons, chariots, elephants, horses, soldiers, and other instruments of worldly power.[67] It seems that, by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the rājaguru was encroaching on the role of the rājapurohita and may have become involved in the retinue of daily rituals that were essential to the well-being of the monarch. These rituals were performed at the time of the king's waking, bathing, and sleeping. They may have included the protection of the king through apotropaic rites prior to eating and/or training in martial arts, as well as the officiation of occasional rituals, such as the periodic worship of deities during special days for the benefit of the king and his kingdom.[68] Indeed, even the new temple, built by Vimalaśiva, may have constituted an official act associated with a royal office, as the temple was endowed with a generous grant of villages by King Jayasiṁha, on the occasion of a solar eclipse.[69]

The inscriptions found throughout the Kalachuri kingdom suggest, at the very least, that the patronage of the Mattamayūras, even earlier in the tenth century, may have served as an attempt to ensure divine sanction for military campaigns. According to the Bilhāri inscription, King Lakṣmaṇarāja bestowed gifts to the temple accompanying the monastery after returning from a victorious battle against the kings of Kosala, to the southeast. The inscription explicitly states: "He worshipped Someśvara with that (*effigy of*) Kāliya wrought of jewels and gold, which he had obtained from the prince of Oḍra, after defeating the lord of Kosala. The prince, having besides presented elephants, horses, white garments, garlands, sandal and other (*gifts*), (*and*) being filled with joy, very humbly praised (*the god*) to get rid of the troubles of worldly existence."[70] The implications of this verse are that the king gave gifts of finery, gold, and jewels (attained as spoils from battle) to the temple associated with the monastery and credited the god Śiva with the ability to grant him liberation in the spiritual realm as well as conquest here on earth. That the act occurred in conjunction with the gift to the monastery implies that the resident sages took an active role in the consecration and installation of the gift. The Mattamayūra sages' role as officiants over transactions was even clearer at the capital of Tripurī, through the survival of copper plate inscriptions that list the rājaguru as one of a number of individuals responsible for overseeing the act of making a royal gift.[71]

The sage Vimalaśiva may have been among the last of the major rājagurus acting under the authority of the Kalachuri kings, as it was after King Jayasiṁha that the Kalachuris began ceding ground to their rivals. Jayasiṁha's successor, King Vijayasiṁha (reigned AD 1188–1210), began losing territory to the kings of Dakṣīṇa Kosala to the east and to the Chandellas to the west. Finally, by the middle of the thirteenth century, inscriptions indicate the incorporation of the region into

the administrative umbrella of the new Islamic sultanates. By the middle of the thirteenth century, inscriptions record the appointment of Naṣīr ud-Dīn Maḥmūd as the Malik Julāchi governor of Chedi country, encompassing the former Kalachuri kingdom. However, the gradual waning of Kalachuri power did not mean the end for the Mattamayūras. Indeed, a copper plate inscription found in the village of Dhureti, just 6 miles (9.6 kilometers) southeast of Rewa, records the mortgage of a village by a Śaiva ascetic Śāntaśiva, described as a "son" of the holy rājaguru Vimalaśiva, in favor of an individual named Rāṇaka Dhareka. Although dated to the Kalachuri year 963 (AD 1212), Śāntaśiva is described as being worshipped by Trailokyamalla, likely referring to the Chandella king Trailokyavarman.[72]

Given the fact that the Chandellas were ardent Śaivas, and that the monuments at the famed site of Khajurāho, as Devangana Desai has demonstrated, appear to be informed by Śaiva Siddhānta theology, it is not too far a stretch to recognize that the Mattamayūras within Kalachuri territory may have been closely associated with the rājagurus acting under the Chandellas.[73] Certainly, by the thirteenth century, the lineage of rājagurus had spawned new networks in other regions. Inscriptions from present-day Maharashtra indicate the growth of Mattamayūra branches in the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the patronage of Śilāhāra kings, who also adopted them as rājagurus.[74] Closer and to the east was a branch of the lineage at Ranipur Jharial in Orissa, which may have been connected not only to the network within Kalachuri territory, but also to the closely knit origins of the sect further west, along the Madhumatī River in southern Gopakṣetra.[75]

The best known, however, were the sages associated with the Golakī Maṭha, who flourished particularly to the south in the Deccan as rājagurus within the Kākatīya royal kingdom. The Golakī Maṭha lineage is primarily known from a pillar inscription from the site of Malkāpuram, commissioned in the thirteenth century in Andhra Pradesh. Although the original seat of the Golakī Maṭha has been variously identified with different sites, including Bherāghāṭ, Gurgī, and Tripurī, the lineage itself came to be associated with the latter. The first teacher recorded in the Malkāpuram inscription was a sage named Dharmaśiva, whose guru and predecessor, Vimalaśiva, has been convincingly matched up with the preceptor who served under the Kalachuri king Jayasiṁha, and who is praised by his successor, the guru Viśveśvaraśiva, as being "worshipped by the lords of Tripurī."[76] Cynthia Talbot has suggested that Dharmaśiva's move from Kalachuri territory to Andhra Pradesh was likely prompted by the military incursions of the neighboring Chandella and Yādava dynasties, which effectively destabilized the Kalachuri kingdom in the early thirteenth century.[77] The move southward brought about significant changes in the structure of Mattamayūra monastic life. As the lineage moved through Andhra Pradesh and further down to Tamil Nadu, the Mattamayūras may have become householders, and the inheritance of the monastery from one generation to another may have become hereditary, passing from father to son, rather than from guru to disciple.[78] The spread and assimilation of the Mattamayūras into the powerful Golakī Maṭha in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu is fairly significant as a longer-lived legacy, as it effectively situated the Mattamayūras from central India at the heart of many later, branching Śaiva Siddhānta lineages.

The path from the forested peripheries of places such as Chandrehe to the center of a major royal kingdom made a significant imprint on the nature not only of the Mattamayūra religious order, but also of the living guru as a bodily figure. During the course of their tenure within the Kalachuri kingdom, the gurus of the Mattamayūra lineage became prominent and transregional symbols of royal authority and agents of the state, rather than spiritual teachers situated at the head of sequestered groups of ascetics and associated with locally based rulers and chiefs. It was through the actions of the rājaguru that the Kalachuri king was initiated and consecrated as the head of a larger lay Śaiva religious community. Similarly, it was through the actions of the gurus seated at other monasteries that the community of householders was similarly brought into the fold through initiation and sustained through continued ritual actions.

The deeply religious bond between guru and king subverts dichotomies between sacred and secular. Even as gurus took on increasingly administrative duties, their authority still resided in their power as ascetic ritual practitioners and their ontological status as sages who had become like the god Śiva himself. In medieval India, the court was never a fully secular zone; it was a place where daily life took on a ritual rhythm, where courtly literature was invested with gods and sacred landscapes, and where heroes and heroines were born as easily in the palace as in a hermitage in the forest.[79] Similarly, Śaiva monasteries, like that seen at Chandrehe, were elaborate engagements with notions of asceticism that spanned the diverse but interconnected worlds of the forest and the court. At Chandrehe, the exterior of the monastery communicated the notion of an open and airy retreat set against a simple temple, at the same time as the interior unfolded through a complex ritual program that was executed using, in part, the visual language of the court. At the center of both was the god Śiva, embodied in the form of a stone liṅga in the temple outside the monastery's walls. At the same time, Śiva was also embodied in the living guru, who, as Chandrehe's inscription tells us, had realized god by practicing religious austerities at an early age, even as a small child on the banks of the nearby river. Having attained this power, he "acted like the rising sun" and became the object of devotion even by kings "*who bowed to him, even as the sun's rays are when they fall on the peaks of mountains.*"[80]

At Chandrehe, in particular, the intricacy of the guru's position within the Kalachuri kingdom was articulated not only through the architecture but also through inscriptional text. Whereas the abode of the supreme guru, the god Śiva, was within the temple built a generation earlier by the resident sage's own guru, the monastery remained a place that was infused with the presence of Śiva. At the same time, the visual language of the building itself and the literary form of the inscriptional text was distinctly courtly. A good case in point can be seen in the inscriptional text, which describes the guru Prabodhaśiva as " [one] whose one hand was skilled in making offerings at the proper time to the high flames of fire (or, *whose one hand was skilled as Kumāra's in feeding his mighty peacock*); who always avoided the company of women; who showed the effect of his power on mighty kings, who was devoted to (Śiva) the enemy of the mind-born; and who performed (*all*) his duties towards the gods."[81] The juxtaposition of the ardent

asceticism of Kārttikeya—who, when mounted on his peacock attendant (vāhana), carried the power to act on behalf of the gods in order to prevail over kings—seems a fitting analogy for a sage of the "Drunken Peacock" clan. At the same time, it uses courtly tropes and poetic language, here employing an extensive act of punning (śleṣa) in order to communicate more than one meaning. The utilization of high literary aesthetics to emphasize the power of an ascetic is quite telling indeed. It points to the multifaceted nature of the guru as both spiritual teacher and courtly agent by the turn of the tenth century.

It is unfortunate that so few full buildings still survive in Kalachuri territory. If Chandrehe is an example of a monastery intended as a local retreat, we can only imagine the scale and elaborate structure of the monasteries at the regional centers of Gurgī and Bilhāri, or the seat of the rājaguru at the Kalachuri capital of Tripurī. It is equally unfortunate that so little survives of the many residences that once belonged to other religious orders—including Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, Buddhists, and Jains—all of whom were recipients of continual royal patronage, as noted in the inscriptional record. Despite this extensive diversity of royal patronage, the inscriptional record gives no indication of tensions between the Mattamayūras and other religious groups. Rather, the gurus within the Kalachuri kingdom seemed to preside on relatively uncontested ground, as practitioners whose position as rājagurus firmly connected them intimately with the king, through the unbreakable and ontologically transformative ritual of Śaiva initiation.[82]

Epilogue

The Legacy of the Drunken Peacocks

With the breakdown of the Kalachuri kingdom in the thirteenth century, the story of the Mattamayūras in central India appears to come to a slow and tapering end, as the lineage found new patronage elsewhere and farther south. Occasionally, an ascetic seems to emerge, as seen, most poignantly, in an epigraph crudely etched into the pavement of the temple accompanying the monastery at Kadwāhā. Dated to VS 1366, or AD 1309–1310, the inscription tells of a sage named Bhūteśvara who performed a special worship of the Śiva liṅga enshrined in the temple following an attack on the site by "barbarians" (*mlecchas*), resulting in damage to a step-well or water tank (jalādhāra) at the site. In addition to donating a new tank, Bhūteśvara practiced severe austerities, most likely as an attempt to prevent further incursions by hostile forces at the site.[1]

It would be easy to jump to the conclusion that the eventual disappearance of the Mattamayūras from central India was likely related to the advent of Islamic forces and the incorporation of many areas of central India into the kingdom of the Khalji and later Tugluq sultans in Delhi. However, to do so would largely miss the point. In fact, the decline of the Kalachuris, which likely was a factor in the Mattamayūra's movement, was more likely related to incursions from the Chandella kings a century earlier. Similarly, Bhūteśvara's record at Kadwāhā points not to an ending but rather to a continuing presence of sages at the monastic site. That the Mattamayūras likely remained in Kadwāhā for many more generations is indicated, at the very least, by Ibn Battuta, who, as I have suggested in a different publication, stopped for a moment at Kadwāhā during his travels in the 1340s. In his writings, he was particularly impressed by the "Jogees with long and clotted hair" who resided among Kadwāhā's temples, and who were attended upon not only by Hindus but also by Muslims.[2] The same was likely true for many other monastic sites, particularly in Gopakṣetra, where religious institutions were not nearly as dependent on the continuity of royal patronage as they were on continuing community support.

In bringing this book to a conclusion, I would like to reconsider the monastery's many histories—to recognize its unboundedness as a form of building and an index of multiple enduring traditions. Not only did the Mattamayūras likely flourish for longer than is implied through their surviving architectural and textual records, but their buildings also continued to live new lives even as they were put to new uses. It is because of their longevity and malleability that the monasteries associated with the Mattamayūras are perhaps so prominent among the handful of surviving monasteries, even as their variegated states of ruination might evoke, in the modern popular imagination, the idea of rupture brought about through conquest. However, endings, like beginnings, were rarely abruptly realized, and the situation on the ground was often extremely complex. As has been seen throughout this book, in the case of Mattamayūra monasteries, renovation and transformation of earlier existing religious sites was extremely common, and what might appear as rupture may sometimes indicate a continuity, rather than discontinuity, of use.[3]

The Monastery as Vernacular Dwelling

Just as the Mattamayūras had many lives, so too did their buildings. Although new at their moment in the centuries leading up to the first millennium, they drew widely upon much older architectural histories. As dwellings, they inevitably incorporated elements of contemporary vernacular architecture. As monasteries, they borrowed selectively from well-defined Buddhist precedents. As buildings, they shed new light on technologies of construction in medieval India that remain unknown from any other source. In short, the surviving corpus of Mattamayūra monasteries represent deep engagements with both past traditions and their contemporary present, in the process of which they oscillated between the domains of what has been frequently considered sacred and secular architecture.

The evidence of just a handful of monasteries may seem fairly meager as a representative example for a broader architectural tradition, but it was far more than Ananda Coomaraswamy had when he set out to reenvision early Indian architecture nearly a century ago. Working primarily from early Buddhist texts and relief sculptures, Coomaraswamy defined a remarkably expansive vocabulary of architectural forms and technologies, mostly executed in wood, underlying the construction of palaces, cities, gateways, and shrines. Palaces were multistoried structures supported by pillars made of stone or wood that stood on foundations that were usually built of stone, to protect against white ants.[4] Their facades and basic structures were, he presumed, like early Buddhist monasteries still preserved in the form of rock-cut monuments at sites such as Kārle, Bedsā, Bhājā, Nāsik, and Ajanta. Thus the upper stories were semipermeable terraces, populated by sculpted representations of individuals looking out at their surrounding landscapes.

In early Buddhist monastic contexts, such terraced mansions are often rightfully understood as bringing architectural vocabularies that were both urban and courtly into the world of the monastery. At the same time, they can be seen as articulating a distinction between the interior realm of the monastery and the exterior world of lay householder devotees. The most famous examples opened up into what were known as caitya halls, which functioned as ceremonial shrines with a Buddhist reliquary mound (stūpa or caitya) situated at the culminating apse. The multistoried palaces with large gateways and open terraces sculpted along the exterior of the caitya hall formed an illusory facade that gave the impression of openness, even as they effectively enclosed the space beyond. By contrast, the facades of Buddhist monasteries, or vihāras, were fronted by open verandas and terraces that appeared almost as windows into an otherwise impenetrable mountain (fig. 6.1).

Situated deep in the forested wilderness, often along tracts of mountains, the open verandas at sites such as Ajanta would have naturally provided views of the surrounding landscape, allowing the wilderness to permeate the space of the monastery. Located far beyond the boundaries of larger cities and towns, they functioned as the ultimate ascetic retreat, meant to bring together both residential communities and itinerant monks, who would gather together, quite literally within a cave, and seek shelter during the rainy season. However, they were not the only paradigm of monastic architecture within the Buddhist world. At larger mercantile

FIG. 6.1.
Overview of rock-cut monastic site, c. 2nd century BC–6th century AD. Ajanta.

and political centers, such as Sanchi, freestanding vihāras took a very different form, one that is much more similar to the kind of monastery seen at sites such as Kadwāhā. These were massive stone buildings with austere masonry walls, which likely communicated a similar impression of interiority and exclusivity within the context of a site that served as a veritable sacred center, where the residence was surrounded by many prominent stūpas and caitya halls. Unlike the vihāras found at more distant, rock-cut sites, these were not fronted by large verandas, but rather likely by shorter porticos, which defined a central north–south axis that led directly to a Buddha shrine in the rear. Thus, already in an earlier Buddhist context, one can see the emergence of two distinct paradigms for monastic dwellings, one of which was found generally in rock-cut form in wilderness settings, and the other of which seemed a more natural fit for urbanizing centers.

The play between the interior and exterior of Buddhist monastic dwellings may well have informed the aesthetics of Śaiva monasteries, where a similar distinction was seen between the openness of the forested retreat and the impenetrable exteriors of the urban institutional center, similarly endowed with a central projecting portico. Beyond these exteriors, however, the Śaiva monasteries that began appearing in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries were very different in their conception of interior spaces. Instead of regularity in room type, the monasteries associated with Mattamayūra sites exhibit a variability that is more in line with vernacular domestic architecture, including havelis (courtyard mansions) and palaces. What little is known about house planning in early medieval India is from architectural treatises, such as the *Mānasāra* and *Mayamatam*, which contain extensive prescriptions for houses of various types, from the moment of site selection to the consecration of a building. It is beyond the scope of my present purposes to draw up an extensive evaluation of how the idealized world of texts

may or may not map out the realities of built forms. However, it is worth noting that the texts themselves present a wide range of possibilities for the internal disposition of spaces, depending on the scale of the residence and the social status of its inhabitants.[5]

Despite their variability, the monasteries themselves exhibit enough consistency to give us a sense for larger habits of building, at levels ranging from general conception to details of execution. In every case, the monastery faces north, marking its orientation through either a front veranda, in the case of the hermitage model, or a projecting portico, in the case of residences built around a central courtyard. The lower story was always the most accessible from the exterior, either enterable directly through the veranda, as at Ranod or the first phase at Surwāyā, or past a short entrance hall leading into the central courtyard at monasteries, as at Kadwāhā. The more "public" rooms in the monastery, by which I mean the rooms that were likely frequented not only by the monastery's residents but also by visitors from outside, were located in the halls to the south, east, and west of the main courtyard. The upper stories, by contrast, appear to have been a more "private" residential zone. They were accessible by staircases that were either attached to the veranda of the monastic dwelling or located just beyond and to the west of the main entrance to the monastery.

One of the most meaningful consistencies across monastic sites was the large, open courtyard. At larger institutional centers, the courtyard functioned as the hub of intersecting axes along the cardinal directions. In monasteries built at a single moment, the axes were aligned with the center of the building, so that they effectively bisected each side into equivalent halves, and the entirety of the residence into four equal quadrants. At places that had begun as smaller hermitages, such as Surwāyā, the axes did not function in quite the same fashion. Rather, they were aligned in ways that reinforced the primacy of the original dwelling associated with the founding guru at the site. In all cases, the primary axes defined the patterns of movement and relationship among internal spaces, on the level not only of form but also of function.

Different parts of the monastery seem to have been reserved for distinct uses, in a way that remains consistent across monastic sites. The most notable is that the eastern wing of the lower story functioned often as the key ritual arena: it was the home of the double-storied grand room at Kadwāhā, the long chamber surmounted by the miniature shrine at Surwāyā, and both the guru's chamber and internal shrine at Chandrehe. The particularity of finding double-storied spaces within the monasteries at Surwāyā and Kadwāhā may further suggest a function akin to a shrine, since it would be inappropriate for residents to dwell above an enshrined object. In this sense, the decision to position the actual sanctum of the internal shrine at Chandrehe beyond the boundaries of the monastery's main wall may represent a new solution to the problem of how to create an internal shrine within the monastery without interfering with the layout of residential spaces.

The east, and particularly the northeast, corners of the monastery's upper story seem also to have become, at least at Surwāyā and Terāhī, spaces intended for the worship of portable icons (see Room 14 at Surwāyā and Room 8 at Terāhī).

The south side was generally dominated by a rectangular room, which, on the first story, may have functioned as a hall for discourse and learning (compare Rooms 11 at Kadwāhā, 6 at Terāhī, and 14 at Chandrehe). The remaining large rooms along the west side of the upper story appear to have functioned as dormitory-style quarters, in a manner that was very different from the small residential cells found within Buddhist contexts. While these dormitories may have been fitted with mats and other furniture, the injunction against the practice of sleeping on beds in the inscription at Ranod was likely in keeping with Śaiva practices and, on a broader conceptual level, the performance of asceticism. It is regrettable that any evidence for the presence of bathing chambers, like those seen at Kadwāhā and Ranod, has been lost at other sites, but it is likely that they would also have been positioned somewhere within the vicinity of the monastery's southwestern end.[6]

The positioning of ritually significant rooms along the east wing may represent an effort to create a conceptual parallel between the monastery and the temple standing just outside. This much is perhaps most evident at Chandrehe and at Surwāyā, where the ritual significance of rooms on the east half may have been equally visible from outside. At Chandrehe, the shrine not only projected outward beyond the extent of the eastern wall, but it may well also have been surmounted by a superstructure that would have differentiated it from the rest of the residence. Encountered from the interior, the passage toward these spaces of enshrinement on the east end of the monastery would have emulated the path of the worshipper moving into the temple.

The engagement between monastery and temple went far beyond the disposition of rooms that may have functioned as internal shrines. It was articulated in many other ways. The most significant was through the creation of axial relationships that linked the entrances to the two buildings, and that would have facilitated movement from one to the other. Also important was the careful creation of views from the monastery's upper story in the form of a balcony that, like the portico below it, projected outward and to the north, to directly engage the arena of the temple. In addition to providing views of the temple and other sacred structures that likely stood in front of the building, these balcony spaces also provided a visual vantage point from which a key member of the monastic community, and most likely the head guru, could present himself in order to be seen by ardent devotees, in the event that such monasteries became sites for practices such as guru-darśana. Whether or not such practices occurred, as I have suggested in Chapter 4, the orientation and ornamentation of such balcony spaces, which were sometimes entered through a doorframe that marked the sanctity of the space beyond, represent a point of permeability and visibility that was deliberately embellished as a critical ritual space.

In addition to exhibiting a cohesive approach to plan and interior spaces, the corpus of surviving buildings lends tremendous insight into core building technologies and practices. The architecture was exclusively built on a trabeated, or post-and-lintel, system, in which stone beams were supported by cruciform-shaped brackets set on pillars spaced at even intervals. The entablatures above were either plain or ornamented simply with a sawtooth pattern. In areas that made up

an open courtyard or open veranda, they supported corrugated eaves (chādyas) that served to shade the areas below. Some form of draining system was usually installed at the level of the upper story floors, to allow for the flow of water down into a recessed central courtyard. On the upper story, the courtyard and/or veranda was enclosed by a half-wall railing (vedikā) that sloped slightly outward and could, depending on the preference, form the back of installed benches. The particular choice of pillars varied according to their placement within the monastery, with the most elaborate forms used in the pillars placed visibly along thresholds or open courts. At Chandrehe, for example, it is not surprising to find the use of special miśraka (mixed-type) pillars on the projection of the veranda on the lower story and around the edges of the open central courtyard.

Another feature that remained fairly consistent from site to site was the treatment of doorways, which were usually inset with a stone frame that supported a door likely made of solid wood. The doors themselves consisted of two leafs set within simple pivot hinges, which were created by carving out holes on either side of the door lintel and sill. They invariably swung inward into the interior of the space that followed and could be easily bolted from inside. At the very least, the entrance to every surviving monastery still retains large square sockets along the interior of the doorframe, which were intended as part of the mechanism for securing the doors.[7] Whereas the doorframes on the interior were generally left plain, on the exterior they were carved with a linear design. The design itself was fairly abstract, yet clearly meant to draw attention to the crucial structural elements of the frame, including the doorsill below, the doorjambs and vertical bands along the sides, and the central spot in the lintel above. Finally, doorways were differently scaled and ornamented, depending on the import and function of the spaces that followed. Those that marked entry to special ritual spaces were sculpted with figures of divinity in a fashion that emulated the temple. Those that served as transitional points to rooms or wings of the monastery that were meant exclusively for the residential monastic community were smaller in scale than those located in more freely accessible spaces. Because doorways were scaled according to the human body, such differences could radically alter the experience of space and, subsequently, either encourage or discourage patterns of movement.

At Chandrehe, the type of stone used in the construction remained consistent on both stories: the walls were invariably fashioned out of large blocks of stone fitted together carefully without the use of mortar. This seems to have been the preference at sites that functioned primarily as monastic retreats. At larger centers, such as Kadwāhā and the later phases at Terāhī, builders frequently employed a combination of vertical stone panels fitted around walls made of smaller stone blocks that served as infill. Floors were made up of thin slabs of stone that were carefully fitted together and fixed in place through the use of "staples," likely made of metal, that can occasionally still be seen on the edges of ruined parts of buildings.[8] These staples were affixed near the seams of individual rooms so that the walls defining individual rooms would rise above and hide them from view. The roofs were also fixed through an elaborate corrugated system, described in Chapter 3, through which thin, rectangular slabs of stone were laid out side by

side, and then their joinings were fixed by an upper layer of thicker but narrower slabs. The individual blocks and slabs of the walls, roofing system, and floors were locally quarried; they often carried mason's marks that served to identify either the individual who finished them or their place of origin.[9]

Finally, the surviving monasteries provide direct insight into a range of ornamental forms that were likely common within medieval Indian urban architecture, some of which also find direct analogues in temple architecture. Pillar types included both plain square (rucaka) and mixed (miśraka) varieties, the former of which could be either completely unadorned or embellished with a vase-of-plenty (ghaṭapallava) motif on the top and bottom. Entablatures often rose in layers of moldings that sometimes were embellished with sawtooth motifs. Balcony and portico half-walls were sculpted to appear as vedikā railings. Such elements likely represent an architectural vocabulary that was not necessarily specific to sacred architecture, but rather part of a common language of forms that was employed in stone architecture used also in urban and courtly contexts. The one set of features that seems particular to residential architecture was the animal-head ornaments that sometimes projected from the upper portion of the wall, and that likely served the additional function of supporting small lamps to illuminate the inner space of the monastery after dark. Although they do not find analogues in other known contemporary contexts, similar types of figures can still be seen along the facades of old family homes, likely dating to the later medieval or early modern period, in the vicinity of earlier monastic sites. Such ornamental figurines, carved out in a permanent medium by skilled sculptors and masons, combine function and aesthetics in a fashion that suggests an earlier elite practice, and likely the infiltration of the courtly into the realm of the monastery.

Conceptually, this intricate interior of the monastery was centered on the guru and a community of disciples who were engaging in ritual practices that functioned, as Richard Davis has suggested, as a "rehearsal of liberation."[10] This was a ritual way of life that began from the moment of initiation, executed through the agency of Śiva acting through the head guru. During the act of initiation, the worshipper experienced an ontological transformation of the soul through a process that followed the ritual re-creation of cosmic emission and reabsorption, from and back into the body of Śiva. It was this cyclical process of creating and destroying the world through the actions of the all-powerful Śiva that was re-created through the performance of daily rites. The complexity of the monastery emerged, in no small part, from the potency of its resident practitioners, a group of dedicated sages engaged in the process of continually remaking themselves as another Śiva on earth, blending the boundaries between humanity and divinity, and between the heavens and earth. The austerity of the monastery's exterior seems equally calculated as a way of reinforcing a particular aesthetics that was not merely about world renunciation, but also about a powerful process of ritual transformation; this could effect ontological changes in the status of the practitioner and also ensure worldly prosperity for kings, sages, and lay devotees.

The longevity of the form of dwelling that emerged at Mattamayūra sites can be seen in just how closely they appear again in later monastic buildings. A

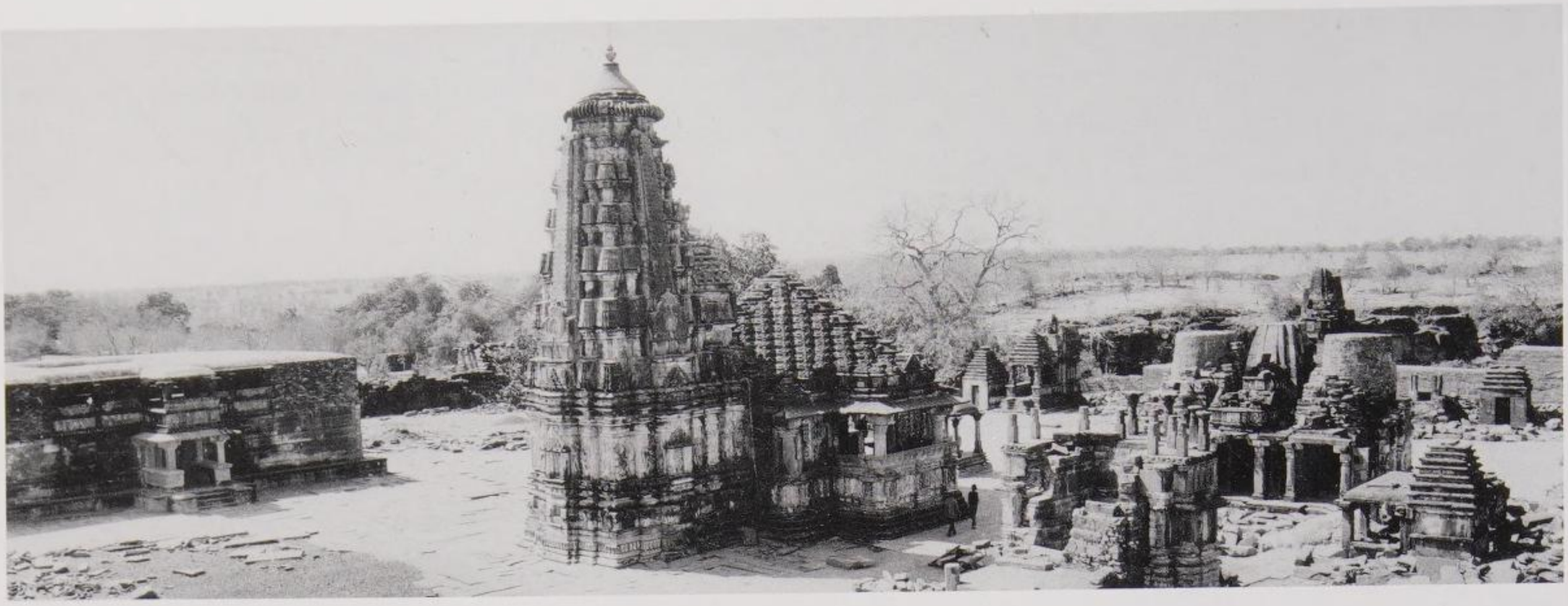


FIG. 6.2.
Overview of main temple complex, c. 1160s AD. Seen from the northeast, Menāl, Rajasthan. Photo ©AIIS.

FIG. 6.3.
Courtyard of the main temple complex, c. 1160s AD. Seen from the northeast, Menāl, Rajasthan.

particularly clear example can be found two hundred to three hundred years later, in twelfth-century Rajasthan, where two new monasteries were built in rapid succession in the 1160s and 1170s for sages affiliated with a different lineage of sages, associated not with Śaiva Siddhānta but with the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata sect.[11] Despite the difference in religious affiliation, the two monasteries represent a reenactment of the parallel set of institutions exemplified by Kadwāhā and Ranod. The first, and larger, of the two was built in 1169 by a sage (muni) named Bhāva Brahma under the patronage of King Pṛthvīrāja II, monarch of the prominent Cāhamāna royal dynasty.[12] Situated in the midst of a larger walled temple complex and positioned appropriately to the south of its accompanying temple, this first maṭha was modeled after the larger institutions exemplified most clearly by the Mattamayūra monastery at Kadwāhā (figs. 6.2, 6.3). By contrast, the second monastery was not within the main complex, but at a short distance to the west and across a stream that overflows and culminates in a stunning waterfall during

FIG. 6.4.
Secondary complex across the river, c. 1160s AD. Seen from the northeast, Menāl, Rajasthan.

the rainy season. This less accessible, and considerably more removed, monastery, not surprisingly, closely followed the example seen at āśramas like Ranod (fig. 6.4).

While the monasteries at Menāl attest to the longevity of the architectural practices established at sites such as Kadwāhā, Surwāyā, and Ranod, they also point to the continuing evolution of the monastery's form. In addition to preserving the key characteristics of both types of dwellings already seen in earlier centuries, the dwellings at Menāl introduce a few new features and refinements that exemplify solutions to architectural problems. The first was through the careful alignment of the monasteries in relationship to their temples: in both cases, the central axis led through the monastery's front portico to the rear wall of the accompanying temple's sanctum. This care in alignment recalls the play with the arrangement of renovated buildings particularly at Ranod and Surwāyā, where the layout of new portions displayed a clear cognizance of the exterior limits of older walls. A second innovation at Menāl can be located through the creation of a single projecting room in the southeast corner of the monastery's upper story (see fig. 0.5, upper middle and lower right plans, respectively). In both cases, the room was equipped with a hole in the floor—presumably to let fluids drain out through the enclosed space below—that was fitted with a drain spout at the level of the ground. This particular room seems to have functioned as a ritual space, and very possibly as a permanent internal shrine on the monastery's upper story.[13] Finally, in the larger monastery in the main temple complex, a second window was set at the center of the west side of the upper story, which would have added a second visual vantage point that literally stood parallel to the point of entry into the temple.

The Afterlives of Monastic Sites

Just as the architectural forms of the monastery continued to take on new life in places like Menāl, earlier Mattamayūra sites continued to develop new meanings through additional acts of renovation and transformations in their use. While the example of Bhūteśvara shows us that the Mattamayūras may have remained active well into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Mattamayūra sages, in fact, were frequently not the final occupants of their monasteries. Imbued with the presence of a powerful religious order—invested with authority through the patronage of kings—monastic sites frequently were reused by subsequent rulers following moments of political transition and cultural transformation.

At Kadwāhā and Surwāyā, for example, the monasteries that once served the purposes of Śaiva ascetics became the inner cores of larger fortresses that were likely founded in the thirteenth century, and that continued to grow for many centuries thereafter. In both cases, the fortifications followed the advent of a new ruling family, the Yajvapālas, who emerged in the second half of the thirteenth century and established a base in Narwar. At Surwāyā, the construction of a new fort gate in AD 1293–94 (VS 1350)—possibly by the Yajvapāla queen Salahaṇadevī and Prince Sāhasamalla, and presumably during the reign of King Gopāla—was recorded in an inscription written on the doorway of one of the temples. That same year, another close associate of King Gopāla, named as rāṇaka Cāciga and described as the king's adopted son (*dharmaputra*), excavated a well (vāpī) and laid out a garden (*vāṭikā*) approximately 3 miles (5 kilometers) north of the site. At Kadwāhā, the Yajvapāla presence was felt most strongly through an inscription composed less than one year later, which similarly describes the excavation of a new well by an individual named Kumārapāla during the reign of the Narwar kings.[14]

Because of their close connections with the Yajvapālas in the late thirteenth century, both Surwāyā and Kadwāhā may have been particularly targeted when the newly established Delhi sultans undertook broad campaigns to bring central India into their domain. The campaigns, which came in distinct and distant waves, were largely directed at major political centers. The first were undertaken by Balban, the slave and deputy of the sultan Naṣīr ud-Dīn Maḥmūd (reigned AD 1246–65), during which Chanderī and Narwar were among a number of regional centers that were targeted. While the weakening of earlier regional powers may have contributed to the Yajvapālas' rise at Narwar, it also presented an opportunity for the neighboring Chandella kings to mobilize forces, in a bid to increase the size of their still-thriving royal kingdom to the east. In AD 1281 (VS1338), the Chandella king Vīravarman led a march against the Yajvapāla king Gopāla that brought him as far as the base of Narwar fort. However, it was not until the turn of the fourteenth century, at some point between AD 1298 and 1305, that Yajvapālas at Narwar finally fell to the forces of 'Alā al-din Khaljī. Since Chanderī was likely also overtaken in that same campaign, it was really at that moment that the Mattamayūras may have begun to lose their institutional support in Gopakṣetra.[15] By the fifteenth century, the sultans Dilāvar Khān (reigned AD 1390–1405) and Mahmūd Shāh Khaljī (reigned AD 1436–69) of Mālāva (Malwā) begin

appearing as overlords at Mattamayūra sites, at which point it is unlikely that the monasteries continued to wield the same political power.

The fortification of monastic sites in response to increasing threats from both the north and the east is not surprising, given how important monasteries had become in the administration of state affairs. While never mentioned in the official chronicles, the monastic sites associated with the Mattamayūras were likely understood as defensible administrative outposts connected with the former rulers of the two most important regional capitals in Gopakṣetra. Whereas Kadwāhā had long held associations with the rulers around Chanderī, Surwāyā seems to have been connected to Gwalior and Narwar. As a result, they were targeted, and their monasteries were likely converted to a new purpose. More specifically, they became sites that contained not only temples but also mosques, and Kadwāhā in particular likely became an Islamicate *ribāṭ,* or a fortress set up on the outskirts of an empire, in order to provide a safe place of respite for holy warriors, travelers, and traders. In a sense, this conversion of the fortified monastery into a fortress mosque represented an act of reuse that preserved the essential function of the space as an administrative outpost associated with a holy religious order.[16] At the same time, the conversion of the monastery did not constitute a typical act of iconoclasm: mosques were added, but the temples were not necessarily destroyed. At Surwāyā, the smallest and least significant of the three temples was converted into a mosque through the application of a new facade; the others were left untouched. Similarly, at Kadwāhā, the temple town that had grown around the monastery continued to flourish and serve as an abode for Śaiva ascetics.

Ranod was no less affected by such historical changes. Its extensive inscriptional and architectural record documents the area's significant growth during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly under the sultans Sher Khān of Chanderī and Maḥmūd Shāh of Mālāva, and again in spurts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, during the reigns of the Mughal emperors Jahāngīr, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb. The monastery itself was likely similarly converted at some point during this history into either a ribāṭ or an Islamic school (*madrasa*), as indicated less through the visible destruction of the building than through the absence of its temples and the presence instead of a nearby, elaborately rendered mosque and tomb (fig. 6.5). By the middle of the seventeenth century, at the very least, Ranod had become an official administrative subdivision (*tahsīl*), granted by the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr to Chaudhri Chintāman Bakkāl, whose family still held the royal deed (*sanad*) at the time of the publication of the *Imperial Gazetteer* in 1908. It was no doubt a thriving place when it was first encountered by the British, who ascribed its decline to the Maratha incursions of the eighteenth century. However, it seems to have remained significant even as late as 1857, when it was sacked during a series of particularly bloody and destructive encounters between Sir Robert Napier and Prince Firuz Shah during the 1857 Indian mutiny.[17]

The clear continuing political importance of Ranod and the subsequent destruction caused by these skirmishes may have added to Alexander Cunningham's impression of Ranod as "an old decayed town of some size" as

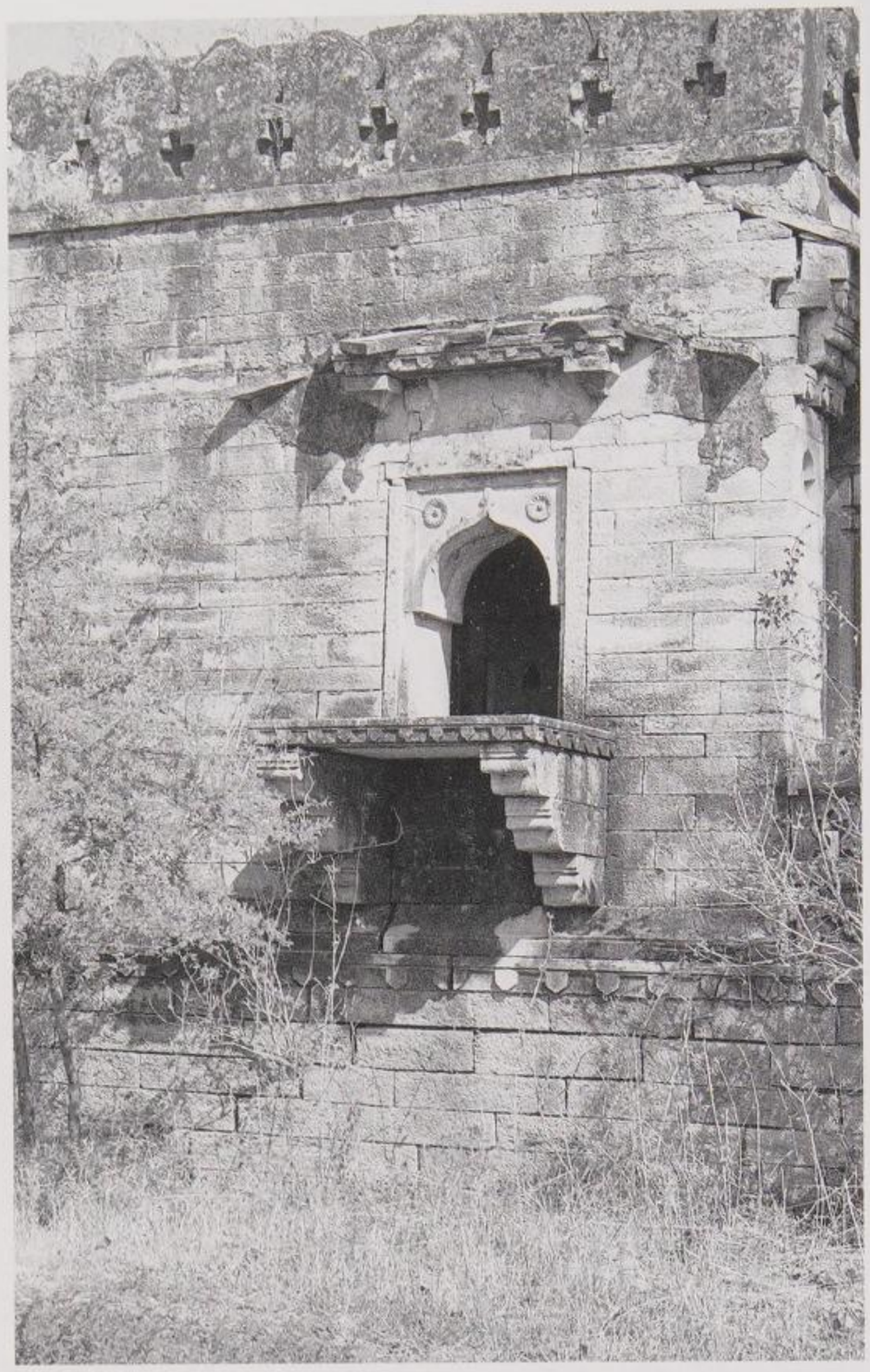


FIG. 6.5.
View of a mosque near the monastery site, c. 15th or 16th century AD. Ranod.

well as a former palace when he encountered it for the first time just a few years later, in 1864–65. At the time, he wrote, "Ranod, or Narod as it is usually called by the peasantry . . . is situated on the west bank of the Airāvati or Ahirpat Nala, a small running stream which falls into the Sindh River above Narwar. In former days it would appear to have been a place of some consequence, as it can still boast of both Hindu and Muhammadan remains of considerable interest."[18] In addition to evoking the long-lost heritage embedded in the archaeological remains, Cunningham's report called attention to the rustic nature of the place. He described the "magnificent groves of old tamarind, mango, and other trees" that surrounded Ranod and made it "one of the prettiest places in this part of the country."[19]

Throughout their sultanate, Mughal, and colonial histories, the monasteries of the Mattamayūras continued to hold meaning for the pious, even long after their lives as monastic sites—as attested to by the dozens of pilgrims' records found scattered, like graffiti, across both monasteries and their accompanying temples. These records, although often short, index the longevity of sacred places and the imprint of holy sages who continued to be felt even long after their memories had faded. At Chandrehe, for example, the temple beside the monastery was visited by a woman named Vājamānī, a carpenter named Gaṇapati, an individual named Caṇḍīhara, and, most significantly, an anonymous visitor who came to pray to Śiva "for the benefit of his beloved."[20] Today, the same temple, just as modest as it once

was, retains a deeply rooted power for its local community, despite the absence of even a designated formal priest. Every day, widows and older women come with their pails of water, to take darśana and perform their own bathing (abhiṣekaḥ) of the liṅga. Tenth-century sculptural fragments, culled from the remains of the monastic site and assembled loosely at the base of a nearby tree, have become part of the women's daily circuit. Once just a small component of the ornamental program of the nearby dwelling, they have been reanimated and reinvigorated with a new form of divine presence.

At Ranod, the monastery itself has been resuscitated and transformed from a static archaeological site into a place of active worship. Served every day by a local *pūjāri* (attending priest), the goddess Bījasen Devī has become the monastery's prime inhabitant, presiding from the platform that may well have once served as the seat of the head guru in the central room on the lower story of the original hermitage. Her presence at Ranod is particularly revealing, not only of the monastery's renewed status as sacred architecture, but also of the continuing connection between regional sites. Bījasen Devī, who seems to have a strong base of support today throughout central India, and especially in places just to the north of the Narmadā River, is also prominently situated not far from the monastic site at Kadwāhā, in a temple that may well have been built approximately three hundred to four hundred years ago. During my last visit to Kadwāhā, in December 2012, the priest at the temple informed me that his family has been responsible for performing the daily pūjās for at least seven generations, or approximately two hundred years.

While the temple itself awaits further examination, its presence within Kadwāhā notably establishes the continuity of the village as a major hub for political and religious activity. Just as Kadwāhā remains central within a much larger cluster of villages, its police chief remains the overseer of wider-ranging disputes, and the Bījasen Devī temple forms one of the most important places of worship within its present-day surrounds. During election seasons, it forms an important stop on the campaign trail, as I was able to witness in February 2002, when Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia, mahārāja of Gwalior and later minister of power for India, was running for office in a by-election held to fill the parliamentary seat of his recently deceased father. Timed to coincide with a biweekly festival that never fails to attract large crowds of devotees, the mahārāja's cavalcade of white Tata jeeps made a deep impression, garnering crowds of Congress party supporters numbering far beyond Kadwāhā's own local population, gathered together in a field not far from Bījasen Devī's abode. Seated with him in the honorific tent at the front were the members of the village council (*pancāyat*) and other local dignitaries. Although the trappings were modern, in form they evoked a flavor of how the Mattamayūra monastery and its temple may have functioned at one time, bringing together the local and the regional in a conflation of religion and politics.

The juxtaposition of ancient and modern reveals less a thread of unbroken continuity than successive moments of reuse, each of which contributed to the

FIG. 6.6.
View of the temple and mosque, visible from right to left, c. 10th–14th century AD. Seen from the southeast, Kadwāhā.

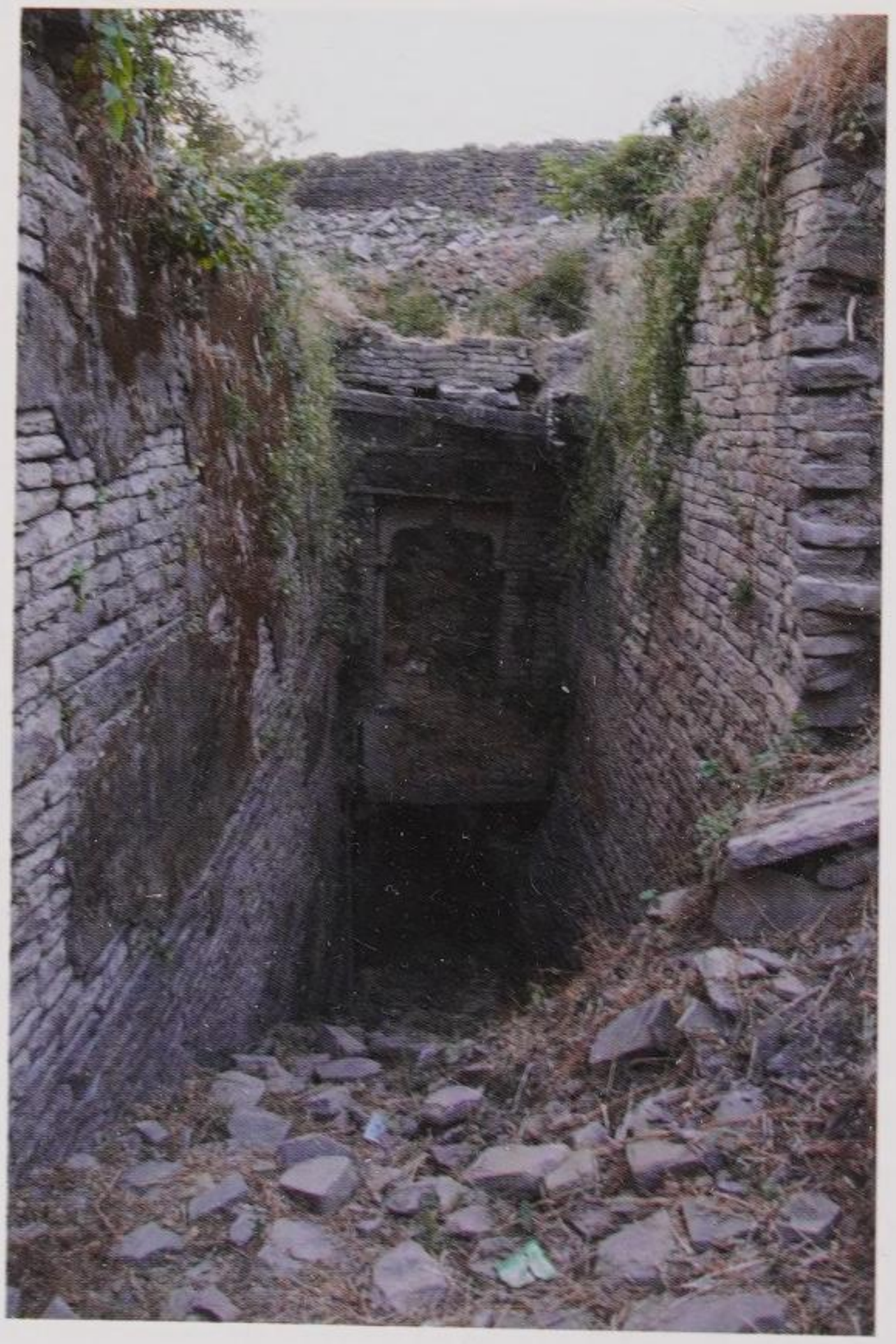


FIG. 6.7.
Closer view of the stepped well next to the monastery recently excavated by the Archaeological Survey. Seen from the east, Kadwāhā.

layering of meaning at monastic sites. As has been seen throughout this book, acts of renovation and transformation were not radical ruptures, but rather indices of growth and adaptation. The current iterations, articulated through present-day worship, archaeological excavation, and scholarly endeavors, are as much about discovery as they are about a reinvention—of making monuments resonate with a present generation. Perhaps the latest example can be found at the former Mattamayūra center at Kadwāhā, where the Archaeological Survey of India has recently completed a new project aimed at recovering and highlighting the site's historical significance. In addition to resetting the foundations of many of Kadwāhā's temples, archaeologists have, through the removal of dirt and rubble, revealed the remains of a large stepped well standing just to the north of the monastery's temple (figs. 6.6, 6.7). It is a magnificent structure, built up in multiple phases, and it must have once been a prominent fixture at the monastic site. At its roots may even be the original waterway (jalādhāra) established by the sage Bhūteśvara in AD 1309–10, described at the beginning of this chapter. If this was indeed the case, then even a seemingly desperate attempt to redress damage caused by incursions under Ala al-din Khalji takes on new meaning, not as a statement of sadness and loss, but rather of renewal undertaken on a large scale. Although it has been at least three-quarters of a millennium since Bhūteśvara and his predecessors traversed Kadwāhā's grounds, their legacy lives on. Even in the absence of a resident monastic community or even a designated priest, the site retains the power endowed by its many makers, whose presence has been built permanently into the place.

NOTES

THE FOLLOWING ABBREVIATIONS APPEAR IN THE NOTES:

ARE	*Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*
ASIAR	*Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*
ASIPREC	*Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Progress Report, Eastern Circle*
ASIPRWC	*Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Progress Report, Western Circle*
CASIR	*Archaeological Survey of India, Cunningham's Report*
CII	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*
EI	*Epigraphia Indica*
EITA	*Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*
GAR	*Annual Report of the Archaeological Department, Gwalior State*
IA	*Indian Antiquary*
IAR	*Indian Archaeology—A Review*

INTRODUCTION

1. *CASIR* (1862–65): 303–304.

2. Ibid., 305.

3. Henry Cope, "Memorandum Regarding the Recently Discovered Ruins of Ranode, in Scindeah's Dominions," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 16, no. 2 (1847): 1079–88; quoted from 1087.

4. *CASIR* (1862–65): 305–306.

5. F. Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod (Narod)," *EI* 1 (1892): 351–61.

6. All three were either noted or edited by F. Kielhorn in "Bilhari Stone Inscription of the Rulers of Chedi," *EI* 1 (1892): 252–70, in *IA* 20 (1891): 85.

7. *CASIR* (1874–76): 9. Despite Beglar's note, the inscription was not fully evaluated until half a century later, in R. D. Banerji, "The Chandrehe Inscription of Prabodhasiva: The Kalachuri Year 724," *EI* 21 (1931–32): 148–53.

8. The secondary source literature on this topic is vast. See, for example, Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Giles H. R. Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture: Continuity, Controversy, and Change Since 1850* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989). The question of the Greek origins of Indian architecture was a fairly hot topic of debate, fueled by an interchange of essays between James Fergusson and Bengali antiquarian Rajendralala Mitra, who, in 1870, first published his "Origins of Indian Architecture," which was reprinted subsequently as the first chapter of *Indo-Aryans: Contributions Towards the Elucidation of Their Ancient and Mediæval History* (Calcutta: W. Newman, 1881). Also influential may have been Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (London: J. Murray, 1876) and *Tree and Serpent Worship, or Illustrations of Mythology and Art in India in the First and Fourth Centuries after Christ* (London: India Museum, 1868). It may be worth noting that a century earlier, William Hodges made an impassioned plea that Indian architecture not be judged solely against a Greek prototype, but rather on its own merits as an alternative engagement with the potentialities of architecture as a medium, in his "Dissertation on the Prototypes of Architecture, Hindoo, Moorish and Gothic," published as part of his *Travels in India, During the Years 1780, 1781, 1782, and 1783* (London: J. Edwards, Pall-Mall, 1793), 63–77.

9. This issue is discussed at length in Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977).

10. *CASIR* (1862–65): 419–20.

11. Ibid., 423.

12. See, for example, Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850–1922: Occidental Orientations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Partha Mitter, *The Triumph of Modernism: India's Artists and the Avant-Garde, 1922–1947* (London:

Reaktion Books, 2007); and Sonya Rhie Quintanilla, Nandalāla Basu, and Pramod Chandra, *Rhythms of India: The Art of Nandalal Bose* (San Diego: San Diego Museum of Art, 2008).

13. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "Buddhist Primitives," in *The Dance of Śiva: Fourteen Indian Essays* (New York: Sunwise Turn, 1918), 46–55, and "The Origin of the Buddha Image," *The Art Bulletin* 9, no. 4 (June 1927): 287–329.

14. Stella Kramrisch, *Indian Sculpture* (Calcutta: YMCA; Oxford University Press, 1933), and "Chandella Sculpture: Khajurāho," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* 1 (December 1933): 129–47.

15. It is worth noting that new systems of classification distinguishing between "historic importance" and "architectural value" were made in relationship to official policy pertaining to conservation and preservation in the 1910s and 1920s. See Sir John Hubert Marshall, *Indian Archaeological Policy, 1915: Being a Resolution Issued by the Governor General in Council on the 22nd October, 1915* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1916), and *Conservation Manual: A Handbook for the Use of Archaeological Officers and Others Entrusted with the Care of Ancient Monuments* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1923).

16. *ASIAR* (1914–15): pt. 1, 21, pl. xvii.

17. *EITA* 3, pt. 2, pl. 46.

18. Only one monastery—that at Chandrehe—has been published in a broader survey of Indian art. See Susan L. Huntington and John C. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (New York: Weatherhill, 1985), 463, fig. 20.16.

19. The Sanskrit terms listed are as defined in Vaman Shivaram Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* rev. ed. (1957; reprint, Kyoto: Rinsen, 1998), 665–67. A brief history of the changing roles of gurus within Indic society is provided by Joel D. Mlecko, "The Guru in Hindu Tradition," *Numen* 29, fasc. 1 (July 1982): 33. For an overview of the guru as a receptacle for divinity in Tantric traditions, see Andre Padoux, "The Tantric Guru," in *Tantra in Practice,* ed. David Gordon White (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 41–51. See also Antonio Rigopoulos, ed., *Guru, the Spiritual Master in Eastern and Western Traditions: Authority and Charisma* (Venezia: Libreria Editrice Cafoscarina, 2004).

20. Prominent modern-day maṭhas include the Vaiṣṇava Ramakrishna Mission and Gaudiya maṭhas in eastern India; the Daśanāmī Sringeri and Kanchipuram maṭhas in the south, which are among many who claim descent from Śaṅkarācārya (c. eighth century); and the wide range of Nāth Yogī lineages who trace their origins back to Matsyendranātha (c. ninth century) and Gorakṣanātha (c. twelfth century). Although some of these claims may find their source in much later reinventions, the basic structure of their communities and networks are rooted in the kinds of institutions articulated through the forms of this earlier corpus of buildings. Studies of modern-day monastic orders tend to fall under the purview of historians, anthropologists, and religious studies scholars rather than art historians. See Ferdinando Sardella, *Modern Hindu Personalism: The History, Life, and Thought of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Vasudeva Rao, *Living Traditions in Contemporary Contexts: The Madhva Matha of Udupi* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2002); David Miller and Dorothy Wertz, *Hindu Monastic Life: The Monks and Monasteries of Bhubaneswar* (Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press, 1976); Sondra L. Hausner, *Wandering with Sadhus: Ascetics in the Hindu Himalayas* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); and G. S. Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus* (Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1953). For the Nāths, the landmark study is Véronique Bouillier, *Itinérance et vie monastique: Les ascètes Nāth Yogīs en Inde contemporaine* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2008). For a recent reconsideration of the Daśanāmī maṭhas, see Matthew Clark, *The Daśanāmī-Saṃnyāsīs: The Integration of Ascetic Lineages into an Order* (Leiden: Brill, 2006). The most famous of these new Śaiva monastic orders are attributed to the famed Indian philosopher and theologian Śaṅkarācārya. On Śaṅkara, see Śaṅkarācārya and V. K. Subramanian, *Śivānandalaharī of Śaṅkarācārya: Sanskrit Text in Devanagari with Roman Transliteration, English Translation, Explanatory Notes and Index* (Delhi: Abhinav, 2007); N. V. Isaeva, *Shankara and Indian Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993); and William Cenkner, *A Tradition of Teachers: Śaṅkara and the Jagadgurus Today* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995).

Publications on medieval Hindu monasteries include R. N. Misra, "The Śaivite Monasteries, Pontiffs and Patronage in Central India," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 64–66 (1993): 108–124; A. K. Singh, "A Saiva Monastic Complex of the Kalachuris at Chunari in Central India," *South Asian Studies* 18 (2002): 47–52; and Anila Verghese and Dieter Eigner, "A Monastic Complex in Vithalapura, Hampi Vijayangara," *South Asian Studies* 14 (1998): 127–40. Sergio Meliton Carrasco-Alvarez's doctoral dissertation, "Brahmanical Monastic Institutions in Early Medieval North India" (PhD diss., Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1990), presents the most comprehensive compilation of inscriptions pertaining to maṭhas. Useful assessments of Buddhist monasticism in South Asia include Vidya Dehejia, *Early Buddhist Rock Temples* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972); Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962); Debala Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments* (Calcutta: Sahitya Samsad, 1971); Walter Spink, "On the Development of Early Buddhist Art in India," *The Art Bulletin* 40, no. 2 (1958): 97–104; Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in South Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996); and Jonathan A. Silk, *Managing Monks: Administrators and Administrative Roles in Indian Buddhist Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Images of the monasteries at Kutch, Narannag, Kundalpur, and Ranch can be accessed through the AIIS Photographic Archives, located in Gurgaon, just outside

of New Delhi. Additional photographs of Kundalpur and Ranch can be found in the Oriental and India Office Collections at the British Library (Photo 575/1 [40], Photo 1005/3 [288c], and Photo 1005/3 [289c]). A brief yet useful mention of the monastery at Kutch, known by the name Vadi-Medi, can be found in *IAR* (1977–78): 134. On Balsane, see *ASIPRWC* (1918–19): 45–46. On Menāl, see Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rajasthan: The Pāśupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," *South Asian Studies* 23 (January 2007): 107–126. For examples in Orissa, see Miller and Wertz, *Hindu Monastic Life,* 11–14; and Krishna Chandra Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar* (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1961), 226–27. A possible Śaiva monastery has been excavated at Jumlagarh near Maragoda (Kalahandi district) in Orissa (*IAR* [1983–84]: 63), and another has been noted at Bisesra in the Bilaspur district of Chattisgarh by R. K. Sharma, *Encyclopaedia of Art, Archaeology, and Literature in Central India* (New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1998), 2:420.

21. On the term "early medieval," see Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994). On the role of religious groups in new political formations, see, particularly, Alexis Sanderson, "The Śaiva Age," in *Genesis and Development of Tantrism,* ed. Shingo Einoo (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 2009); Ronald Inden, "Imperial Purāṇas: Kashmir as Vaiṣṇava Center of the World," in *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia,* ed. Ronald Inden, Jonathan Walters, and Daud Ali (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

22. Sanderson, "The Śaiva Age." It is useful to note that Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅginī* (c. AD 1194) is replete with references to monasteries of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Buddhist, and Jain religious institutions. For editions and English translations, see Marc Aurel Stein, ed. and trans., *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kaśmīr,* 2 vols. (Westminster [UK]: A. Constable, 1900); and Jogesh Chunder Dutt, *Kings of Kāshmīra: Being a Translation of the Sanskrita Work Rājataraṅgginī of Kalhana Pandita* (Calcutta: I. C. Bose, 1879).

23. On the utility of thinking in terms of "disciplinary orders" rather than "sects" or "schools," see Ronald Inden et al., *Querying the Medieval,* 11, 23–24.

24. For two particularly cogent assessments of the integration of monasteries into the structure of local and regional kingdoms, see Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, "Historiography, History and Religious Centers: Early Medieval North India, circa AD 700–1200," in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200,* ed. Vishakha Desai and Darielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, in association with University of Washington Press, 1993), 36–46; and R. N. Misra, "Beginnings of Śaiva Siddhānta and Its Expanding Space in Central India," in *Sāmarasya: Studies in Indian Arts, Philosophy: Interreligious Dialogue—in Honour of Bettina Baumer,* ed. Sadanand Das and Ernst Furlinger (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2005), 275–306. On the complicated relationship between sect and caste, see the introductory essay to David Lorenzen, ed., *Religious Movements in South Asia 600–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

25. See, for example, Romila Thapar, "Renunciation: The Making of a Counter-Culture," in *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 1978), 62–64.

26. The history of early Buddhist architecture in India is very well known. Some key sources include H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharl, 1966); Seshabhatta Nagaraju, *Buddhist Architecture of Western India, c. 250 BC–c. AD 300* (Delhi: Prakashan, 1981); Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments;* Dehejia, *Early Buddhist Rock Temples;* Kurt Behrendt, *The Buddhist Architecture of Gandhara* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); and Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism, 600 BC–1000 BC* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner; E. P. Dutton, 1924). Most general survey texts also provide a highly adequate overview of this history. Good overviews can be found in Huntington and Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India;* J. C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (Harmondsworth [UK]: Penguin Books, 1986); and Christopher Tadgell, *The History of Architecture in India* (London: Phaidon, 1995).

27. On havelis, see Sarah Tillotson, *Indian Mansions: A Social History of the Haveli* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1998).

28. This seems to be the case across India, both at well-known sites—such as Ellora, Elephanta, Ekaliṅgaji, and Bhubaneśvara—and at sites that are better known today for their regional importance. For example, see Charles Dillard Collins, *The Iconography and Ritual of Śiva at Elephanta* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Nandini Sinha, "A Study of State and Cult: The Guhilas, Pasupatas and Ekalingaji in Mewar, Seventh to Fifteenth Centuries A.D.," *Studies in History* 9, no. 2 (1993): 161–82; and Thomas E. Donaldson, "Lakulīśa to Rājaguru: Metamorphosis of the 'Teacher' in the Iconographic Program of the Orissan Temple," in *Studies in Hindu and Buddhist Art,* ed. P. K. Mishra (Delhi: Abhinav, 1999).

29. Key sources on the development of temple forms during this period include Krishna Deva, *Temples of North India* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1969); Adam Hardy, *The Temple Architecture of India* (Chichester [UK]: Wiley, 2007); Michael Meister, "On the Development of a Morphology for a Symbolic Architecture: India," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 12 (1986): 33–50; Krishna Deva, "Bhūmija Temples," in *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture,* ed. Pramod Chandra (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975); Madhusudan Dhaky, *The Indian Temple Forms in Karṇāṭa Inscriptions and Architecture* (New Delhi: Abhinav, 1977); and Ajay Sinha, *Imagining Architects: Creativity in the Religious Monuments of India* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000).

30. For more on the importance of gurus and, more precisely, rājagurus at these three sites, see Vidya Dehejia, *Art of the Imperial*

Cholas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 49–50; R. Nagaswamy, "Iconography and Significance of the Bṛhadīśvara Temple, Tañjāvūr," in *Discourses on Śiva,* ed. Michael W. Meister (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 174–75; H. V. Trivedi, *Inscriptions of the Paramāras, Chandēllas, Kachchapaghātas, and Two Minor Dynasties,* vol. 1, *CII* 7 (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1978), 53–60, 146, 240–43; and Thomas E. Donaldson, "Lakulīśa to Rājaguru." In the case of the Chandellas, or the patrons of Khajurāho, we find inscriptions containing names of rājagurus, and *mahā-rājagurus,* both at Khajurāho and at the royal capital at Kālañjar, and a compelling case has been made for the active participation of both Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra and Śaiva Siddhāntha preceptors, or ācāryas, in the construction of Khajurāho's temples, as Devangana Desai has suggested in *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho* (Mumbai: Franco-Indian Research, 1996). Alexis Sanderson has written more extensively on the relationship between rājagurus and other royal religious officiants in "Religion and the State: Śaiva Officiants in the Territory of the Brahmanical Royal Chaplain (with an Appendix on the Provenance and Date of the Netratantra)," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 47 (2004): 229–300.

31. See, particularly, Inden, "Imperial Purāṇas."

32. Tamara Sears, "Building Beyond the Temple: Sacred Centers and Living Communities in Medieval Central India," in *A Companion to Asian Art and Architecture,* ed. Rebecca Brown and Deborah Hutton (Chichester [UK]: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

33. See, for example, Hermann Kulke, *Kings and Cults: State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1993); Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); Chattopadhyaya, *Making of Early Medieval India,* and "Historiography, History and Religious Centers"; James Heitzman, *Gifts of Power: Lordship in an Early Indian State* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Cynthia Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 87–125.

34. I am indebted here to the legacy of Hayden White's highly influential publication, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), as well as to several decades of post-structural and post-colonial re-writings in critical theory and history. While the field is too large to cite fully here, some key texts and anthologies include David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies* (London: Anthem, 2002); Partha Chatterjee and Anjan Ghosh, eds., *History and the Present* (London: Anthem, 2006); and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999). Particularly useful for rethinking the medieval through postcolonial theory are Inden et al., *Querying the Medieval;* Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Sheldon I. Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009).

35. In exploring architecture's power to mediate spatial experience, I have been particularly drawn by Diane Favro's discussions of urbanism in Augustan Rome in "Reading the Augustan City," in *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art,* ed. Peter J. Holliday (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 230–57. A more detailed analysis of "experiential legibility" can be found in Favro's monograph, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 227–32.

Michael Meister has described the temple as an "axis for access" designed to facilitate the ritual aspirations of those who entered it. He writes: "The Hindu temple must act as access and approach for aspirants and worshippers. . . . On that [longitudinal] axis the worshippers approach their personal divinity within the sanctum; but also on that axis the aspirants increasingly can place themselves, in halls built for that purpose, as if under the umbrella of the sacrificer, positioning themselves for ascent. . . . Personal ritual within the temple involves both approach and circumambulation, and movement by the aspirant through time toward release had to be a recognized part of the architect's program for the temple"; see Meister, "The Hindu Temple: Axis of Access," in *Concepts of Space, Ancient and Modern,* ed. Kapila Vatsyayan (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 1991), 269–80. Elsewhere, Meister has described the temple as "a juncture between the divine and human worlds" and "a place of transition, invoking the potential for transformation of the worshipper"; see Meister, "Fragments from a Divine Cosmology," in Desai and Mason, *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers,* 110. An accessible overview of the temple's function as a passage to the world of the gods is George Michell, *The Hindu Temple* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 61–76.

For further discussion of the relationship between asceticism and aesthetics, and particularly on how the immateriality of ascetic existence constitutes a kind of aesthetics, which was envisioned through the idealized beauty of the ascetic body as a signifier of otherworldly aspiration in both Indic and non-Indic contexts, see Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Gavin D. Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), esp. 113–14, 223–31; and J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969).

36. The peacock is so commonly associated with the monsoon that it is impossible to provide comprehensive documentation. For representative cases, see Siegfried Lienhard, *A History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit*

(Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1984), 23, 39–40; and P. Thankappan Nair, "The Peacock Cult in Asia," *Asian Folklore Studies* 33, no. 2 (January 1, 1974): 93–170. For terminology, see Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* 1226, 1240.

37. The earliest synthesis of the material associated with the Mattamayūras was provided by V. V. Mirashi in "The Śaiva Ācāryas of the Mattamayūra Clan," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 26 (1950): 1–16, and subsequently also throughout his volume *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* vol. 4, pt. 1, *CII* (Ootacamund: Gov. Epigraphist for India, 1955). On the pan-Indic nature of Śaiva Siddhānta, see Richard H. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe: Worshiping Śiva in Medieval India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 14–19, and "Aghoraśiva's Background," *Journal of Oriental Research* 56–62 (1986–92): 367–78; Karen Pechilis Prentiss, "A Tamil Lineage for Śaiva Siddhānta Philosophy," *History of Religions* 35, no. 3 (February 1996): 232–34; and Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, ed. and trans., *Somaśambhupaddhati,* 4 vols. (Pondicherry: Institut français de Pondichéry, 1963, 1968, 1977, 1998), 4:xliii–lii. Also significant are Devangana Desai's recent arguments for understanding the central Indian temple site of Khajurāho, located to the west of Chandrehe, as a Śaiva Siddhānta site (*Religious Imagery,* 57–60, 149–74).

38. Travis Smith has made the argument that the Mattamayūras played a key role in the revival of Banāras as a major center of Śaivism. See Travis LaMar Smith, "The Sacred Center and Its Peripheries: Śaivism and the Vārāṇasī Sthala-Purāṇas" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2007). Southern India is particularly noted for its rich epigraphic record, which has enabled detailed writings of economic, political, and social histories that simply cannot be matched for most of central India due to a paucity of sources. See, for example, Stein, *Peasant State and Society;* Heitzman, *Gifts of Power;* and Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice.*

39. Although the full body of consulted literature for other fields is too extensive to cite in its entirety, key sources include C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London: Longman, 1984), 18–38; Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe: The Architecture of the Orders* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), 24–36; Herbert Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages,* 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); Erwin Panofsky, "Abbot Suger of St.-Denis," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955; reprint, 1982), 108–145; Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1965); Janet E. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain: 1000–1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); James E. Goehring, ed., *Ascetics, Society and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1999); James A. Benn, Lori Meeks, and James Robson, eds., *Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2010); and Eugene Yuejin Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005).

40. See, for example, hymn LXXXI–LXXXII in the *Rg Veda.* The emphasis on cosmic parturition as a continuous process of differentiation, through which multiplicity emerges from the same single source, is one of the most prevalent in Indic philosophy and is articulated in some version in multiple religious schools. In Śaiva Siddhānta, it is articulated through the envisioning of cosmic creation through a process of emission and reabsorption, with the ultimate source being equivalent to Śiva. In terms of architecture, see Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple,* 2 vols. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946).

41. Although I have not employed the quantitative aspects of their methodology, I have found these scholars' general approaches a useful point of departure for thinking through the larger problems of assessing spatial hierarchies, movement, and social and ritual functions of architectural spaces. See Ian Hodder and Clive Orton, *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards, *Architecture and Order: Approaches to Social Space* (London: Routledge, 1997); Ross Samson, ed., *The Social Archaeology of Houses* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); and Henry Glassie, *Vernacular Architecture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000). Also useful in thinking about how architecture structures movement is Adam Hardy's recent "The Expression of Movement in Architecture," *Journal of Architecture* 16, no. 4 (2011): 471–97.

42. Prasanna Acharya, *Architecture of Manasara,* 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Oriental Books, distr. by Munshiram Manoharlal, 1980); and Bruno Dagens, trans., *Mayamatam: An Indian Treatise on Housing, Architecture and Iconography* (New Delhi: Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Scientific Research, 1985). The hierarchies embedded in the *Mānasāra* were usefully synthesized by Ron Inden in "Hierarchies of Kings in Early Medieval India," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 15, no. 1–2 (January 1, 1981): 99–125, and more recently also by Daud Ali in *Courtly Culture.* See also B. D. Chattopadhyaya, "The City in Early India: Perspectives from Texts," *Studies in History* 13, no. 2 (August 1, 1997): 181–208.

43. Minoru Hara, "Hindu Concepts of Teacher: Sanskrit Guru and Ācārya," in *Sanskrit and Indian Studies: Essays in Honour of Daniel H. H. Ingalls,* ed. M. Nagatomi (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1980), 100, 103–104. In Śaiva traditions, the guru acted more specifically as Śiva, so that such a liberation was akin to the act of granting and receiving grace (*anugrāha*) directly from the supreme god himself. For considerations of the transformation of the ascetic body as realized through art, see Michael Meister, "Art and Hindu Asceticism: Śiva and Vishṇu as Masters of Yoga," in *Art and Archaeology of South*

Asia: Essays Dedicated to N. G. Majumdar, ed. Debala Mitra (Calcutta: Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of West Bengal, 1996), 315–21, and "Image Iconopraxis and Iconoplasty in South Asia," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics,* no. 51 (April 1, 2007): 13–32. For a broader consideration of the role of gurus and ācāryas in the Gupta era, see Michael Willis, *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual: Temples and the Restablishment of the Gods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 219–33.

44. See, for example, verses 10, 14, 15, 20, 23, 29, 30, and 44 of the Ranod inscription; verses 8, 10, and 13 of the Buḍhi Chanderī inscription; verse 14 of the Kadwāhā inscription; verses 7, 11, and 21 of the Gurgī inscription; verse 40 of the Gwalior Museum inscription; and verses 57–58 of the Bilhāri inscription. For Sanskrit editions of these inscriptions, see Kielhorn, "A Stone Inscription from Ranod"; Balchandra Jain and Chandra Bhushan Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription of the Time of Raṇapāladeva: V. S. 1100," *Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda* 26, no. 1 (1976): 87–90; V. V. Mirashi and A. M. Shastri, "A Fragmentary Stone Inscription from Kadwaha," *EI* 37, no. 3 (July 1967): 117; V. V. Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum Stone Inscription of Pataṇgaśambhu," *Journal of the Madhya Pradesh Itihasa Parishad* 4 (1962): 3; Kielhorn, "Bilhari Stone Inscription"; and Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, 204–233.

45. Translations of "maṭha," "āśrama," and "guru-kula" are from Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskṛit-English Dictionary* (1899; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 158, 359, 774. See also *Mṛgendrāgama, Caryāpāda* 1.67, 1.73ab, translated from Sanskrit into French by Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, *Mṛgendrāgama: Section Des Rites Et Section Du Comportement: Avec La Vṛtti De Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇakaṇṭha* (Pondicherry: Institut français d'indologie, 1985). See also Jorg Gengnagel, "The Śaiva Siddhānta Ācarya as Mediator of Religious Identity," in *Charisma and Canon: Essays on the Religious History of the Indian Subcontinent,* ed. Vasudha Dalmia, Angelika Malinar, and Martin Christof (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 82.

46. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "Early Indian Architecture: IV: Huts and Related Temple Types," ed. Michael W. Meister, *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* no. 15 (April 1, 1988): 5–26. See also Michael W. Meister and Joseph Rykwert, "Afterword: Adam's House and Hermits' Huts: A Conversation," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* no. 15 (April 1, 1988): 27–33, 125, 127.

47. Meister and Rykwert, "Afterward: Adam's House," 128.

48. Kazi Ashraf, "Buddha's House," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 53/54 (Spring–Autumn 2008): 225–43, esp. 226.

49. This is a point I develop further in Tamara Sears, "Encountering Ascetics on and Beyond the Indian Temple Wall," in *History and Material Culture in Asian Religions,* ed. Benjamin Fleming and Richard Mann (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

50. This is to be differentiated from architectural treatises that may be influenced by Śaiva Siddhānta, such as the *Mayamatam,* which give extensive prescriptions pertaining to houses and urban planning, but limited mention of monasteries. The *Somaśambhu-paddhati,* by contrast, contains a significant section on consecrations (*pratiṣṭhā*) of both temples and monasteries, as will be discussed later in this book. See Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* vol. 4.

51. The Sanskrit text and a French translation is provided in Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* 4:xxx, 380–89. A brāhmaṇa is involved not as the primary ritual performer, but rather as a hired priest who carries the vase invested with Śiva's presence, and who follows directly after the head guru and his disciples.

52. T. Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers of the Sixteenth Century: Nigamajñāna I and His Disciple Nigamajñāna II* (Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry, 2009), 123.

53. This relief has been published in Desai, *Religious Imagery,* 202, and Michael Willis, "Religion and Royal Patronage in North India," in Desai and Mason, *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers,* 152. However, it has rarely been discussed at length. Desai interpreted it as "a dancer converses with a religious *acharya* seated beneath a canopy," and Willis as a "relief in the temple platform showing a Śaiva *acharya* with disciples and attendants."

54. For example, see Gavin D. Flood, *Tantric Body: The Secret Tradition of Hindu Religion* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); and Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe.*

55. The idea of repetition finds expression in a Mattamayūra inscription from Chandrehe, in which the guru Prabodhaśiva is extolled for having "realized God by activities including the study of scripture and the performance of religious austerities and meditation that he learned by imitating his own Guru" (verse 11). Although it is difficult to pinpoint the precise action depicted in the relief, inscriptions and Śaiva Siddhānta texts prescribe a variety of important rituals that were performed within such monasteries. See also *Caryāpāda* 1.29–33 of the *Mṛgendrāgama,* translated by Brunner-Lachaux, 360–61. On the role of the guru as the key transmitter of true ritual knowledge, see Padoux, "Tantric Guru"; and Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* ix, 34–35, 72–74.

CHAPTER 1. IN SEARCH OF "DRUNKEN PEACOCKS"

1. Paraphrased from the Ranod inscription, verses 11–15.

2. It is striking how frequently the publication of an inscription is accompanied by acknowledgments to the party who had provided the reproduction. This is the case for nearly all of the editions of Mattamayūra inscriptions. See, for example, Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 351, 353–54; Mirashi and Shastri, "A Fragmentary Stone Inscription," 117; and Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 3.

3. Notable studies on the region include Michael Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra* (London: British Museum Press, 1996), and *Temples of Gopakṣetra: Architecture and Sculpture in Central India, AD 600–900* (London: British Museum Press, 1997); and R. N. Misra's various essays, including "Religion in a Disorganized Milieu," in

Organizational and Institutional Aspects of Indian Religious Movements, ed. Joseph O'Connell (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1999), and "Beginnings of Saiva Siddhanta." The region is significantly excluded from the classics of dynastic histories, such as H. C. Ray, *The Dynastic History of Northern India: Early Mediaeval Period* (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1931); and R. C. Majumdar, *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, vol. 4, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955). When treated, it is usually in the context of larger studies of Pratīhāra and Kacchapaghāta architecture. See R. Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period in Central India* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1990); Deva, *Temples of North India;* and Madhusudan Dhaky and Michael W. Meister, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture [EITA]* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1983). On the first mention of Gopakṣetra in Kacchapaghāta sources, see Willis, *Temples of Gopakṣetra,* 17. Here I deviate significantly from the literature, which tends to link the Kacchapaghātas distinctly to monuments at a wide range of sites, including those in southern Gopakṣetra, to which it is unlikely that they extended their political influence. See, for example, *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 15–36. For further explanation of the problems of dynastic patronage around the turn of the millennium in this region, see Tamara Sears, "Mobile Communities and Temple Towns: Kadwāhā at the Turn of the First Millennium CE," *South Asian Archaeology 2010* (submitted).

4. For more on geography, see Michael Willis, "An Introduction to the Historical Geography of Gopakṣetra, Daśārṇa, and Jejākadeśa," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 51, no. 2 (January 1, 1988): 271–78, and *Temples of Gopakṣetra,* 16–18; and Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya, *Historical Geography of Madhya Pradesh from Early Records* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977).

5. Mirashi was the first to point out that the Madhumatī River is mentioned in Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava.* See Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas," 1–16, 6n10; and Willis, *Temples of Gopakṣetra,* 17. Although the temples at Baktar are unpublished, the rest are cataloged in *EITA* 2, pt. 2, 3–61; Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period,* 67–70, 95–96, 121–25; and Willis, *Temples of Gopakṣetra,* 36–41, 59–60, 68, 73, 79–81 (pls. 8–12), 93–96, 100–103, 118–19, 141–42.

6. See, for example, Romila Thapar, *From Lineage to State: Social Formations in the Mid-First Millennium B.C. in the Ganga Valley* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1984); B. D. Chattopadhyaya, "Historiography, History and Religious Centers"; and Misra, "Religion in a Disorganized Milieu." On the other hand, Sondra Hausner has noted in her recent ethnography, *Wandering with Sadhus,* that physical geography was a crucial factor in attracting wandering ascetics.

7. Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353; Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas"; V. V. Mirashi and A. M. Shastri, "Fragmentary Stone Inscription," 119–21; and Misra, "Shaiva Siddhānta," in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India,* ed. J. S. Grewal (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 61n18, and "Beginnings of Śaiva Siddhānta," 280n27.

8. Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353; Bilhāri inscription, verses 33–35. The genealogy that Mirashi proposed is as follows: Avantivarman (AD 825), Avanivarman (AD 850), Sadhanva (AD 875), Siṁhavarman (AD 900), Narasiṁha (AD 950), Keśarin (AD 975). See also Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 8–9. Mirashi and Shastri additionally suggested that Narasiṁha was a feudatory of the Chandella king Kṛṣṇapa, younger brother of King Dhaṅgadeva (AD c. 950–1005) ("Fragmentary Stone Inscription," 119). However, there seems to be a conflict with dates.

9. Richard Davis, "Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," in *Tantra in Practice,* ed. David White (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 131–45; Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353.

10. For references to the Madhumatī, see the Gurgī inscription, verses 3, 19; Chandrehe inscription, verses 4–5; and Bilhāri inscription, verses 43, 49, 52, 55. See also S. Sankaranarayanan and G. Bhattacharya, "Mahua Inscription of Vatsaraja" *EI* 37 (1967): 53–55. The author of the inscription, Bhaṭṭa Īśāna, is notably mentioned as having hailed from the North Indian center of Kannauj (ancient Kānyakubja).

11. On Chanderi, see Gérard Fussman, Denis Matringe, Eric Ollivier, and Françoise Pirot, *Chanderi Du Xe Au XVIIIe Siècle: Naissance Et Déclin D'une Qasba (sous La Direction De Gérard Fussman Et Kanhaiya Lal Sharma),* 3 vols. (Paris: Boccard, 2003); and Jain and Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription."

12. The historical sources associated with Kalachuri sites can be found in Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 198–233, 324–39.

13. See, for example, Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 4–9; and Sanderson, "Śaiva Age." David Gordon White, citing Jan Gonda's *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1977), usefully positions Śaiva Siddhāntins as the group "who have defined mainstream Śaiva ritual devotionalism for the past twelve hundred years or more," in *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 97.

14. Kadwāhā inscription, verses 14–18. Note that this reading is slightly different from that of R. N. Misra, who suggested, "Gobhaṭa attacked enemy-forces while visiting the pontiff Dharmaśiva at his monastery at Kadwāhā" ("Śaivite Monasteries," 76). It is notable that the inscription literally refers to the sage as taking on the "play" of Śiva, since divine interventions in earthly affairs were frequently couched in terms of the "play of the gods." See, for example, William Sturman Sax, *The Gods at Play: Līlā in South Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Akos Östör, *Play of the Gods: Locality, Ideology, Structure, and Time in the Festivals of a Bengali Town* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Don Handelman and David Dean Shulman, *God Inside Out: Śiva's Game of Dice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

15. Misra, "Śaivite Monasteries," 76.

16. Davis, "Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," 133–34. For more on warrior ascetics, see William R. Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Palakuriki Somanatha, Velcheru Narayana Rao, and Gene H. Roghair, *Śiva's Warriors: The Basava Purāṇa of Palkuriki Somanātha* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); and David Lorenzen, "Warrior Ascetics in Indian History," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 98, no. 1 (1978): 61–75. For similar cases of rituals of royal consecration, see Sanderson, "Religion and the State," 233–34; Sanderson, "Śaiva Age," 259–60; and Vidya Dehejia, "Kalachuri Monarch and His Circular Shrine of the Yoginis," in *Royal Patrons and Great Temple Art,* ed. Vidya Dehejia (Bombay: Marg, 1988).

17. This story is told in verses 22–33 of the Kadwāhā fragmentary inscription.

18. Translation by Chattopadhyaya in "Historiography, History and Religious Centers," 40.

19. This term is used to describe Harirāja in the Kadwāhā fragmentary inscription, verse 22.

20. I have covered this ground in Sears, "Mobile Communities." For more on imperial titles, see B. N. Puri, *History of Indian Administration,* vol. 2, *Medieval Period* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1975), 2–4. See also F. Kielhorn, "Siyadoni Stone Inscription," *EI* 1 (1889): 162–79. The influence of the Gūrjara Pratīhāras in the general area around Buḍhi Chanderī can be felt briefly in an inscription of VS 999 (AD 933) mentioning some irrigation works at the nearby site of Rakhetra. See Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 3; *GAR* (1924–25): no. 32; *ASIAR* (1924–25): 168; Hari Har Niwas Dvivedī, *Gvāliyara Rājya Ke Abhilekha* (Gvāliyara: Madhya Bhārata Purātatva Vibhāga, 1947), no. 16; and R. S. Tripathi, *History of Kannauj* (Benares: Indian Book Shop, 1937), 271 and 258. Here I also differ with Sanjay Sharma, who cites the Kadwāhā inscriptions as an example of how local kings, who may have belonged to collateral Gūrjara Pratīhāra lineages, projected a self-image of Gūrjara identity; see his "Legitimation and Patronage under the Gurjara Prātīhāras of Kanauj," *Studies in Indian History* 22, no. 2 (2006): 181–220. He, however, misreads the inscriptional reference and cites it as an example of an instance where King Harirāja is a recipient of a grant of some villages (189), rather than as an example where the king gives a gift of villages to his initiating guru.

21. Kadwāhā inscription, verse 32. Although no longer legible, verses 33 and 34 of the inscription presumably followed the general practice of listing the names of the villages granted by the king toward the end of the inscriptional record.

22. Sanderson, "Religion and the State," 233.

23. Even more closely related to the king on a day-to-day basis were Śaiva gurus who lived in the king's palace and acted as the king's personal chaplains. Since it is clear from both inscriptions that the initiating Mattamayūra gurus presumably remained in residence at their monastery, rather than relocating to the royal household, it is probably safe to assume that a guru did not function as the king's rājapurohita, or personal chaplain, who was responsible for performing the full gamut of rituals to ensure the well-being of the king. These included daily rituals performed at the time of the king's waking, bathing, daily training in martial arts, and sleeping, as well as occasional rituals for the benefit of the king and his kingdom, including, but not limited to, the worship of deities and the blessing of royal weapons before military expeditions. Nonetheless, they most likely played a critical role in major festivals that occurred at temple centers. See also Sanderson, "Religion and the State," 246–70.

24. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 2; Chandrehe inscription, verse 5–6; Gurgī inscription, verse 3.

25. The identification of the fourth stream varies from source to source. For example, Vācaspati Misra (c. AD 850) uses "Kāruṇika-siddhāntins" rather than "Kālāmukha," and Bhāskarācārya uses "Kāṭhaka-siddhāntin" instead of "Kāruṇika-siddhāntins." Others have used "Kāruka-siddhāntin" instead of any of the above. The use of the term "Kālāmukha" is found in Yāmunācārya (c. AD 1050), Rāmānuja (c. AD 1017–1137), and a number of the *Purāṇas.* This topic is covered in a variety of sources, including Gavin D. Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 154; Krishna Kanta Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture: or, Somadeva's Yaśastilaka and Aspects of Jainism and Indian Thought and Culture in the Tenth Century* (Sholapur: Jaina Samskrti Samrakshaka Sangha, 1968), 234; David Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects* (New Delhi: Thompson, 1972), 1–12, 107; and Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Śaivāgama and the Kubjikā Tantras of the Western Kaula Tradition* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989). See also D. R. Bhandarkar, "An Eklingji Stone Inscription and the Origin and History of the Lakulisa Sect," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 22 (1906): 151–65; M. C. Choubey, *Lakuliśa in Indian Art and Culture* (Delhi: Sharada, 1997); Dyczkowski, *The Canon of the Śaivāgama,* 26ff; and Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas,* 97–98, 141–42. Matthew Clark's recent book, *The Daśanāmī-Saṃnyāsīs,* includes a concise and articulate consideration of the organization of these religious orders during the early medieval period (177–93).

26. The relationship between the two is clarified by Lorenzen in *Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas.*

27. See, for example, Gavin Flood, "The Śaiva Traditions," in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism,* ed. Gavin Flood (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 200–228.

28. Literally meaning a "thread" or "strand," tantra has eluded definition, and scholars remain undecided as to whether it should be understood specifically as connected to a set of Sanskrit textual traditions or more widely to also include folk practices and "magical" beliefs. See, for example, Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions"; Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown, eds., *The Roots of Tantra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); and Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu*

Tantric and Śākta Literature, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981). See also David White, ed., *Tantra in Practice* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).

29. Overviews of Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta can be found in the entries "An Overview" and "Śaiva Siddhānta," written by David Lorenzen and Mariasusai Dhavamony, respectively, in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 13:6–12. See also Alexis Sanderson, "The Śaiva Exegesis of Kashmir," in *Mélanges Tantriques ā La Mémoire d'Hélène Brunner: Tantric Studies in Memory of Hélène Brunner*, ed. Dominic Goodall and André Padoux (Pondicherry: Institut français d'indologie, École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2007), 238. See also Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, "Jñāna and Kriyā: Relation Between Theory and Practice in the Śaivāgamas," in *Ritual and Speculation in Early Tantrism: Studies in Honour of André Padoux*, ed. Teun Goudriaan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992). That these authors drew widely from earlier sources is unsurprising, given that their intention was to create an encyclopedic compendia that subsumed and clarified earlier Āgamic texts. See Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 16.

30. The entirety of Richard Davis's book, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, is devoted to exploring this larger question.

31. Alexis Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual," in *Essais sur le ritual III*, ed. Anne-Marie Blondeau and Kristofer Schippers (Louvian: Peeters, 1995), 17.

32. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, xi.

33. Ibid., 104.

34. A succinct overview of this process is also provided in Flood, *Tantric Body*, chap. 6. See also Davis *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 92–101. The seminal study on initiation is Jan Gonda, "Dīkṣā," in *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion* (The Hague: Mouton, 1965). While not all forms of initiation were a liberating initiation, verses from Mattamayūra inscriptions make it clear that the conferral of initiation by a Mattamayūra teacher was a liberating act. Verse 4 of an inscription from Buḍhi Chanderī states that students initiated by the Mattamayūra sage Dharmaśambhu are freed from the "bondage of a body" because their impurities have been removed; for a Sanskrit version, see Jain and Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription," 87–90. Similarly, verse 49 of an inscription from Bilhāri recalls the sage Purandara's initiation of King Avantivarman, which "completely removed the stain of impurity from the king" (translation by Mirashi in *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, 204–224). The fragmentary inscription from Kadwāhā similarly describes the sage Dharmaśiva as taking on Śiva's own form.

35. Useful sources for the early history of Śaiva Siddhānta include Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 14–19; Alexis Sanderson, "Saivism and the Tantric Traditions," in *The World's Religions*, ed. S. Sutherland et al. (London: Routledge, 1988), 660–704; Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual," 15–95; and N. N. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion* (New Delhi: Manohar), 244–45, 64–65. Śaiva texts still frequently regulate which rituals could be done by different castes, and at a later point in South India, the highest ritual privileges became reserved for members of the specifically Śaiva brāhmaṇa caste. But during this early moment, it is likely that initiation status mattered more than caste. See Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 41. It is also worth noting that many of the more important Śaiva Siddhānta nāyaṉmār bhaktī saints of southern India were members of the untouchable caste. See Karen Pechilis Prentiss, *The Embodiment of Bhakti* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Indira Viswanathan Peterson, *Poems to Siva: the Hymns of the Tamil Saints* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989).

36. On the prevalence of kriyā and jñana in Śaiva Siddhānta in relationship to other ritual traditions, see Goudriaan Gupta, *Hindu Tantric*, 2:8. A good case in point is the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* of Īśānaśiva Gurudeva, originally edited by T. Ganapati Sastri, and recomposed, revised, and enlarged by N. P. Unni (Delhi: Oriental Book Centre, 2006), where the *Kriyāpāda* is by far the longest section; it contains 64 *paṭalas*, in comparison with the 52 paṭalas of the *Sāmānyapāda* and *Mantrapāda* combined. The *Yogapāda* itself is extremely short in comparison, as it contains only three paṭalas. The opposite seems to be the case with earlier texts, such as the *Parākhyatantram*, ed. and trans. Dominic Goodall (Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry; École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2004). This text has been identified by Dominic Goodall as probably the latest of the pre-tenth-century Śaiva Siddhānta texts

37. To some extent, the use of earlier *Śaiva Āgamas* in South Indian temples constitutes a modern revival, as described by Christopher John Fuller in *The Renewal of the Priesthood: Modernity and Traditionalism in a South Indian Temple* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003). However, earlier sources, such as Ārumuga Nāvalar, *Śivālaya Darśana Vidhi* ("The Proper Way to Worship at Śiva's Temple"), published in 1851, suggest that revivals of earlier Āgamic traditions happened periodically in the past. See Dennis Hudson, "How to Worship at Siva's Temple," in *Religions of India in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 304–320.

38. On the initiation of kings, see Alexis Sanderson, "History Through Textual Criticism in the Study of Śaivism, the Pañcarātra and the Buddhist Yoginītantras," in *Les Sources et le Temps: Sources and Time: A Colloquium, Pondicherry, 11–13 January 1997*, ed. François Grimal (Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry/École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001), 8–10, n6. Among the most famous cases are that of the Cholas (see Dehejia, *Art of the Imperial Cholas*, 49–50; and Nagaswamy, "Iconography and Significance," 170–81); the Chandellas (see Trivedi, *Inscriptions*, 53–60, 146); the Kalachuris (see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*); the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and Guhilas (see Ranabir Chakravarti, "Coastal Trade and Voyages in Konkan: The Early Medieval Scenario," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 35, no. 2 [June 1, 1998]:

97–123); and the Paramāras (see Trivedi, *Inscriptions*, esp. 146; and ASIAR 1906: 240–43). See also Desai, *Religious Imagery*. Alexis Sanderson has written more extensively on the relationship between rājagurus and other royal religious officiants in "Religion and the State." See also D. C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), 152–55; and Inden, "Hierarchies of Kings," 99–125.

39. Ron Inden, *Imagining India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 23. Inden, in *Querying the Medieval*, even more importantly argues that "disciplinary orders" played a critical role in the formation of imperial powers in early medieval India. This represents an important intervention, because it shifts the focus away from seeing the patronage of temples and religious institutions as merely an act of ideological legitimation, and instead reconsiders the active role that new religious groups played in reformulating the religious systems through which royal authority was constructed.

CHAPTER 2. INSCRIBING ASCETICISM

1. Richard Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy: A Guide to the Study of Inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and the Other Indo-Aryan Languages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3–6. See also Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Early Indian Numismatic and Epigraphical Studies* (Calcutta: Indian Museum, 1977).

2. The first publication was a relatively brief but densely written essay, "The Śaiva," on which Mirashi followed up in greater detail in the introductory chapters to his *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, pt. 1:cl–clix. In addition, the Mattamayūras have been the focus of study by V. S. Pathak, *History of Saiva Cults in Northern India, from Inscriptions 700 AD to 1200 AD* (Allahabad: Abinash Prakashan, 1980), 32–37, 46–50; Misra, "Śaivite Monasteries," 72–86, 108–124, "Religion in a Disorganized Milieu," and "Beginnings of Śaiva Siddhanta," 275–306; Ramprasad Mishra, *Fragments of Indian Culture: A Study on Mattamayūra Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Śāktaism, Yoginī Cult, Tāntric Buddhism, and Minor Religions of Ranipur-Jharial* (Calcutta: Punthi-Pustak, 1995); and, more recently, Davis, "Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," 131–45. In addition, the Mattamayūras have been mentioned or further discussed in many other scholarly texts, a few of which include Sanderson, "Śaiva Age," 61, 263, "The Saiva Religion Among the Khmers, Part I," *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient* 90–91 (2003–2004): 396, 431, and "History Through Textual Criticism," 9–10, n6; Mark Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), 4–5; R. K. Sharma, *The Temple of Chaunsaṭha-Yoginī at Bheraghat* (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1978), 20–23; Sharma, *The Kalachuris and Their Times* (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1980), 196ff, 227; Hans Bakker and Harunaga Isaacson, *The Skandapurāṇa*, vol. IIA, *Adhyāyas 26–31.14, The Vārāṇasī Cycle* (Groningen: Forsten, 2004), 32–33; Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture*, 340–41, 482; Kailash Chand Jain, *Madhya Pradesh Through the Ages, from the Earliest Times to 1305 AD* (New Delhi: B. R. Publishing; distributed by D. K. Publishers, 1997); Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *Paurāṇic and Tāntric Religion; Early Phase* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1966), 104–106, and *Religion in Art and Archæology: Vaishṇavism and Saivism* (Lucknow: University of Lucknow, 1968), 59–63; J. K. Sahu, "Saivism in Orissa," in *Sidelights on History and Culture of Orissa*, ed. M. N. Das (Cuttack: Vidyapuri, 1977), 330–32; Walter Smith, *The Mukteśvara Temple in Bhubaneswar* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994), 26–27, 73, 86; Thomas E. Donaldson, *Tantra and Śākta Art of Orissa*, 3 vols. (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2002), 2: 653–54, 808; and Nilima Chitgopekar, *Encountering Śivaism: The Deity, the Milieu, the Entourage* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1998), 101–104.

3. On earlier cases of royal patronage of Śaiva Siddhāntins, see Sanderson, "History Through Textual Criticism," 8–10, n6.

4. Daud Ali has noted particularly the intertextuality of Chola inscriptions, and particularly the interweaving of local histories and *Purāṇic mythologies* for political effect. See Daud Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History: Rethinking Copper-Plate Inscriptions in Cola India," in *Querying the Medieval*, 165–229. See also Ronald B. Inden, *Text and Practice: Essays on South Asian History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Pollock, *Language of the Gods*, 134–48. For an overview on hagiography in Indic contexts, see Winand M. Callewaert and Rupert Snell, eds., *According to Tradition: Hagiographical Writing in India* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994); Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, eds., *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia* (Oakville, Ont.: Mosaic, 1988); and David Lorenzen, "The Social Ideologies of Hagiography: Sankara, Tukaram, and Kabir," in *Religion and Society in Maharashtra*, ed. Milton Israel and N. K. Wagle (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1987). In my own examination, I am indebted to recent work that looks at inscriptions in new ways as objects that communicated power and prestige through their very presence, and as nonlinear narratives that intentionally interwove local affairs with larger world histories, courtly literary tropes, and Hindu cosmologies. On the visuality and materiality of inscriptions, see Patrick Olivelle, Janice Leoshko, and Himanshu Prabha Ray, "Introduction," in *Reimagining Asoka: Memory and History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3–4. See also Frederick Asher, ed., *Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art* (New Delhi: Oxford and IBH, 1985), in which Gary Michael Tartakov's "Interpreting the Inscriptions of Mahākūṭa Historically" and Susan Huntington's "Epigraphy from Art History: Studies in the Art of the Pāla Period" are particularly useful. The essays assembled in Peter James Holliday, ed., *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art*, have been particularly influential in the exploration of the dialectics of agency between maker, audience, and object, as has been Alfred Gell's posthumously published *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (New York: Clarendon, 1998). On the

relationship of inscribed text to location, see also Robert E. Harrist, Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).

5. Arvind Kumar Singh, "Inscriptions from Kadwaha, Dist. Guna (M.P.)," *Prāgdhārā: Journal of the U.P. State Archaeological Organisation* 10 (2000): 229–39; Mirashi and Shastri, "Fragmentary Stone Inscription," 117–24; Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 3–12; Jain and Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription," 87–90; and Kielhorn, "Bilhari Stone Inscription," 252–70. The inscriptions from Kalachuri territories were all edited and translated by Mirashi in *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era.*

6. F. Kielhorn, "Kharepatan Plates of Rattaraja; Saka-Samvat 930," *EI* 3 (1894–95): 292–302, and"Rajor Inscription of Mathanadeva; [Vikrama-]samvat 1016," *EI* (1894–95): 263–67; R. D. Bhandarkar, "Karhad Plates of Krishna III, Saka-Samvat 880," *EI* 4, pt. 4 (1896): 278ff; B. Ch. Chhabra, "Ranipur Jharial Inscriptions," *EI* 24, no. 32 (1937–38): 239–45; and Pantulu, "Malkāpuram Stone-Pillar Inscription of Rudradeva (Rudramba)," *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society* 4 (1929): 147–62. See also Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), 2:574–91; and Cyntha Talbot, "Golakī Matha Inscriptions from Andhra Pradesh: A Study of a Śaiva Monastic Lineage," in *Vajapeya: Essays on the Evolution of Indian Art and Culture* (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashn, 1987), 133–46. See also Davis, "Aghoraśiva's Background," 367–78; and Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas."

7. On the Kalachuri era, see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* i–xxx. On other eras, see Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy;* Sircar, *Select Inscriptions,* 219–80.

8. The two copper plate inscriptions were from Jabalpur and Dhureti. On the nature and material production of copper plate inscriptions, see Sircar, *Numismatic and Epigraphical Studies,* 74–78; and Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy,* 113–18.

9. What remains unclear is whether the relative number of verses and scale of the inscriptional object were related to the relative importance of monastic sites. It is tempting to make this assumption, particularly given the fact that the inscriptions from Ranod and Gurgī are so strikingly large. Whereas Gurgī, like Bilhāri and Kadwāhā, were clearly regional centers, Ranod and Chandrehe appear to have been smaller monastic retreats. All dimensions provided in the text are taken from the published editions of the inscriptions, cited above.

10. For an overview of royal praśastis, see Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy,* 110–18; and Sircar, *Numismatic and Epigraphical Studies,* 25–29.

11. There is some overlap here with what Richard Salomon has categorized as "literary inscriptions," which present texts of dramas and other literary works. Salomon makes the distinction as follows: "Although these dramas partake of the character of *praśastis* in that they are intended to glorify the kings in whose courts they were composed and inscribed (the *Pārijatamañjarīis* explicitly described as a *praśasti*), they can nevertheless be considered essentially literary pieces." He notes that the few inscriptions that follow highly poetic forms (e.g., *mahākāvya*) remain "in content . . . primarily eulogistic and dedicatory" (*Indian Epigraphy,* 123).

12. These were worlds, perhaps not coincidentally, that were also articulated through imagery on the walls of Hindu temples during this same period, as noted by Phyllis Granoff in "Heaven on Earth: Temples and Temple Cities of Medieval India," in *India and Beyond: Aspects of Literature, Meaning, Ritual and Thought: Essays in Honour of Frits Staal,* ed. Dick van der Meij (Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1997). A comparison to Kailāsa can be seen in the Bilhāri inscription, verse 24.

13. In the inscription from Ranod, kings are mentioned primarily in passing and in descriptions of a distant past; the main emphasis is on the genealogy and actions of sages. At Kadwāhā and Buḍhi Chanderī, the kings Harirāja and Raṇapāladeva, both of the ruling family of Pratīhāras established locally at Buḍhi Chanderī, appear as contemporaries to the sages who dominate the inscriptional verses, though it is possible that more stress was laid on the monarch Harirāja in the missing last portion of the inscription. At Buḍhi Chanderī, the king appears only in the last line, which establishes the date of the inscription during the "auspicious reign of Śri Raṇapāladevarāja." See Jain and Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription," 90. On royal patronage in Kalachuri inscriptions, see particularly Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* clviii–clix, clx–clxi.

14. Mirashi notes the striking resemblance between the Nāgarī letters seen in the inscriptions from Bilhāri, Chandrehe, and Gurgī; see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 204, 225.

15. Sheldon Pollock, "The Sanskrit Cosmopolis, 300–1300 CE: Transculturation, Vernacularization, and the Question of Ideology," in *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit: Contributions to the History of the Sanskrit Language,* ed. Jan E. M. Houben (Leiden: Brill, 1996), and *Language of the Gods.*

16. This is largely Daud Ali's point, argued quite convincingly in *Courtly Culture,* esp. chap. 1.

17. Salomon notes that Nāgarī "became the closest thing to a national script in India for writing Sanskrit" (*Indian Epigraphy,* 41).

18. Bheṛāghāṭ inscription, verses 34–37, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 17.

19. Ranod inscription, verses 68–69; Bilhāri inscription, verse 86, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 217.

20. See, for example, Ali, *Courtly Culture;* Flood, *Objects of Translation;* and Pollock, *Language of the Gods.* I am grateful to Nachiket Chanchani for pointing out the need to polish the tablet. For further discussion on the mechanics of stone engravings, see Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965), 70–73.

21. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verses 19–20. See also Jain and Trivedi, "Budhi Chanderi Inscription," 88.

22. Bilhāri inscription, verse 85,

translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 217.

23. On Rājaśekhara in the Kalachuri kingdom, see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* clxxiv–clxxvi; Chattopadhyaya, "Religion in a Royal Court," in *Making of Early Medieval India;* and Phyllis Granoff, "Portraits, Likenesses and Looking Glasses: Some Literary and Philosophical Reflections on Representation and Art in Medieval India," in *Representation in Religion: Studies in Honor of Moshe Barasch,* ed. Jan Assmann and Albert I. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

24. As Daud Ali has suggested, "Though the parameters of courtly life in India, as elsewhere, acted as a great barrier between the lives of 'good people' and the vast labouring populations which supported them, it is also possible to see that over the long durée, the ways of the court formed an acculturative mechanism through which aspiring men and local élites entered into the pale of 'good society.' At the same time, as this process evolved and as the culture of the court inevitably seeped into the city, the temple, the bazaar and, even its anathema, the village, it was transformed and inflected anew, leading to hybrid forms of culture"; Ali, *Courtly Culture,* 22–23.

25. Ranod inscription, verses 6–7. A second version can be found in the Gwalior Museum inscription, verses 5–6. For a slightly different translation, see Davis, "Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," 138–39.

26. Summaries of the various versions of this story can be found in Thomas E. Donaldson, "Bhikṣāṭanamūrti Images from Orissa," *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 1 (1986): 51–55; Stella Kramrisch, *Presence of Siva* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 259–65; and Don Handelman and David Shulman, *Siva in the Forest of Pines: An Essay on Sorcery and Self-Knowledge* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004). See also Anand Swarup Gupta, ed., and Ahibhushan Bhattacharya, trans. (part I), and Satkari Mukherji, Virenda Varma, and Ganga Sagar Rai (part II), *Kūrma Purāṇa* (Varanasi: All-India Kashi Raj Trust, 1972), 452–61; and Richard Davis, "The Origin of Linga Worship," in Lopez, *Religions of India.*

27. For variations, compare Kramrisch, *Presence of Siva,* 154; *Kūrma Purāṇa,* 37, 5–11, 499–500; and the retelling published by Davis in "Origin of Linga Worship."

28. See, for example, Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas,* 74. Note that the story may be associated also with the vow known as the Pāśupatavrata. See Vasundhara Filliozat, *Kālāmukha and Pāśupata Temples in Dharwar* (Chennai: The Kuppuswami Shastri Research Institute, 2002), 72. This list, found frequently in Śaiva texts, should be easily recognizable as laying out the four major streams of Śaiva religious practice in the early medieval period.

29. My recounting of this story is indebted to Catherine Benton's summaries of different versions of the tale in the *Matsya, Padma,* and *Śiva Purāṇas,* in *God of Desire: Tales of Kāmadeva in Sanskrit Story Literature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 39–42, 51–52.

30. This version, recounted also by Benton (*God of Desire,* 54–55), should not be confused with the version in the *Kūrma Purāṇa.* The *Vāmana Purāṇa* has been published in an edition edited by Anand Swarup Gupta and translated by Satsyamsu Mukhopadhyaya, Ahibhusan Bhattacharya, N. C. Nath, and V. K. Verma (Varanasi: All India Kash Raj Trust, 1968).

31. For a synthesis of Sanskrit sources employing the trope of the peacock in this way, see Nair, "Peacock Cult in Asia," 93–170, esp. 135–50. For related, yet more explicitly religious or devotional, associations in both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava contexts, see Cynthia Packert, *The Art of Loving Krishna: Ornamentation and Devotion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010); Pika Ghosh, *Temple to Love: Architecture and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Bengal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); David L. Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and John Stratton Hawley, *At Play with Krishna: Pilgrimage Dramas from Brindavan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981).

32. In addition to debates on places of origin, two significantly divergent chronologies have emerged in the scholarship. For example, Mirashi, who was the first to assign rough dates to the sages, assigned Purandara to around AD 825 by a simple system of calculation that estimated roughly 25 years for each generation and worked back and forth by using the few dated Mattamayūra inscriptions as a baseline (Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas," 4). Following Mirashi's method of allowing 25 years for each generation, his genealogy would place Kadambaguhādivāsin about 100 years earlier, or around AD 725; Śaṅkamaṭhikādhipati at AD 750; Terambipāla at AD 775; and Āmardakatīrthanātha at AD 800. But both Pathak and Misra place the lineage back even further back, by situating Kadambaguhādivāsin at around AD 675 (Pathak, *History of Śaiva Cults,* 31). Given the fact that inscriptions do not provide any real data on this matter, it is difficult to confirm any of these chronologies or to try to reach a higher level of precision.

33. A highly useful discussion of the problem of orality and literacy in Indian religious contexts can be found in Christian Lee Novetzke, *Religion and Public Memory: A Cultural History of Saint Namdev in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 99–132.

34. Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353; Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas," 2–3; Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 5–6; Pathak, *History of Śaiva Cults;* Misra, "Śaivite Monasteries," and "Beginnings of Śaiva Siddhānta," 275–306. Mirashi, in particular, suggested that Kadambaguhā may be identical with the village of Kamlikheḍā (ancient Kadambapadraka), which is roughly 15 to 16 miles (24 to 26 kilometers) northeast of Ujjain, and that Āmardakatīrtha may be identified with the famous holy city of Ujjain itself. He supported the latter suggestion with a verse from the *Pañjikā* of Brahmaśambhu, which "tells us that the Āmardakādhīśa (lord of Āmardaka, i.e., the same as Āmardakatīrthanātha) lived in Mālavaka though he had a number of disciples (and therefore could have fixed his residence elsewhere)." See Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 5–6.

35. Bhavabhūti, *Mālatīmādhava* 9.16; see Bhavabhūti, *Bhavabhūti's Mālatīmādhava, with the Commentary of Jagaddhara*, ed. and trans. M. R. Kale (Bombay: Oriental, 1908), 79–80.

36. For a similar type of mapping—in an analogous period but different medium region—of hymns sung by Śaiva saints in Tamil Nadu, see Indira V. Peterson, "Singing of a Place: Pilgrimage as Metaphor and Motif in the Tēvāram Songs of the Tamil Śaivite Saints," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 102, no. 1 (January 1, 1982): 69–90. In these cases, Śiva is noted as the one who dwells in particular places, such as "Chieftain of Āmāttūr" or "Dweller of Palanam town" (71). On rudimentary shelters for sages, see Ashraf, "Buddha's House," 227–28. V. S. Pathak has pointed out that Guhāvāsī, or "the resident of the cave," is listed as one of Śiva's twenty-eight incarnations in important texts, including the *Līṅga-Vāyu* and *Kūrma-Purāṇa*, in his *History of Śaiva Cults*, 28–29. Andre Padoux also points to a passage in the *Yoginīhṛdaya* that notes that a liṅga should be round like a Kadamba flower; see André Padoux, "The Śrīcakra According to the First Chapter of the *Yoginīhṛdaya*," in *Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions*, ed. Gudrun Bühnemann (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 245n17. See also Rohan A. Dunuwila, *Saiva Siddhanta Theology: A Context for Hindu-Christian Dialogue* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985), 33–34.

37. Pathak, *History of Śaiva Cults*, 29–31; Davis, "Aghoraśiva's Background," 373–76; M. G. Dikshit and D. C. Sircar, "Senakapat Inscription of the Time of Sivagupta Balarjuna," *EI* 31 (1955–56): 31–36; G. Buhler, "A Grant of Daraṇīvarāha of Vaḍhvāṇ," *IA* 12 (July 1883): 190–95; Kielhorn, "Rajor Inscription," 263–67; and Anne Feldhaus, "Maharashtra as a Holy Land: A Sectarian Tradition," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 49, no. 3 (January 1, 1986): 532–48.

38. For further discussion, see Dennis Hudson, "Early Evidence of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*," in *Roots of Tantra*, ed. Harper and Brown, 151–55; T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography* (Madras: Law Printing House, 1914), 251–56; and Antonio Rigopoulos, *Dattātreya: The Immortal Guru, Yogin, and Avatāra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 223–48.

39. Sanderson draws together some of these sources, but comes to the conclusion that Teramba's connection with Śaiva Siddhānta likely preceded its association with the Non-Dual Trika school, largely on the basis of the Ranod inscription, which he takes as clear-cut evidence for an eighth-century date for the sage Terambipāla, despite the fact that the inscription itself likely dates to the tenth or eleventh century. See Alexis Sanderson, "A Commentary on the Opening Verses of the Tantrasāra of Abhinavagupta," in *Sāmarasya: Studies in Indian Arts, Philosophy, and Interreligious Dialogue, in Honour of Bettina Baumer*, ed. Sadananda Das and Ernst Furlinger (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2005), 120–22, n79.

40. Ranod inscription, verses 8–9; Gwalior Museum inscription, verses 6–9; Bilhāri inscription, verse 48.

41. In addition to the inscriptions from Ranod (verses 10–15), the Gwalior Museum (verse 10), and Bilhāri, as the sage Mattamayurānātha who "completely removed the stain of impurity from the king Avanti" (verse 49; translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, 220), he appears in the Kadwāhā fragmentary (verse 4) and Chandrehe (verse 4) inscriptions, both of which list him as the first in the lineage.

42. See, for example, Richard Davis, "Aghoraśiva's Background," 367–78; Prentiss, "Tamil Lineage," 231–57; and Dominic Goodall, "Problems of Name and Lineage: Relationships Between South Indian Authors of the 'Śaiva Siddhānta,'" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10, no. 2 (July 1, 2000): 205–216.

43. On the general tracing of spiritual lineages back to gods through the original ascetic founder-guru, or ādiguru, who is often homologized with Śiva, see Robert Lewis Gross, *The Sādhus of India: A Study of Hindu Asceticism* (Jaipur: Rawat, 1992), 47. One would have to assume a grammatical elision to see the pun on Purandara's name, as, for the pun to be grammatically correct, the name would have to be "Purendara." While some may find this to be a major sticking point, I think we cannot discount the fact that inscriptions were not always as "correct" in their employment of *samdhi* as texts written by the highest of courtly authors, and that an association between "Purandara" and a "Pura-Indra" was likely heard. See Misra, "Shaiva Siddhānta," 61n18.

44. See, for example, the Gurgī inscription, verse 3. The same inscription later says that King Yuvarājadeva gave a grant of villages to "the great [ascetic] who had completely mastered the (*Śaiva*) *Siddhantas*," (verses 38–40). Translations by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, 230, 233.

45. Kadwāhā inscription, verse 9.

46. Gwalior Museum inscription, verse 16. The *Vyomavatī*, attributed to Vyomaśivācārya, was edited by Gaurinath Sastri, 2 vols. (Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, 1983, 1984). It is impossible to know for sure whether the author of the text, Vyomaśivācārya, was the same as the ācārya Vyomaśiva who lived at Ranod. Because initiation names like Vyomaśiva or Prabhāvaśiva tend to be repeated frequently, it is not always true that a correspondence in name necessarily implies a definitive correspondence in an actual person. Similarly, a single guru could have multiple names. Some problems endemic to tracing lineages on the basis of individual names within Śaiva Siddhānta have been discussed at greater length by Goodall, "Problems of Name and Lineage," 205–216. For more on Vaiśeṣika in general, see Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is: Classical Vaiśeṣika and the History of Indian Ontology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992). See also Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 7.

47. Gwalior Museum inscription, verse 12; Ranod inscription, verse 20.

48. The *Naimittikakarmānusandhana* remains unedited and unpublished. It is mentioned in relationship to other topics by Sanderson, "Śaiva Religion among the Khmers," 396–97. A manuscript of the *Prāyaścitta-samuchchaya* was included in a listing of palm leaf and

paper manuscripts belonging to the Royal Durbar Library in Nepal. See Hara Prasad Shastri, *A Catalogue of Palm-Leaf and Selected Paper MSS Belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission, 1905), 215–16. T. Ganapati Sastri, editor of the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati,* originally suggested that the text's author may have been from Mālavā, which N. P. Unni sought to rebut in his introduction to the revised edition of the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati,* clxvii–clxviii.

49. Ranod inscription, verse 37.

50. Ranod inscription, verses 36, 39.

51. On Vyomaśiva's relationship to the Vaiśeṣika, see P. S. Ramanujam, *A Study of Vaiśeṣika Philosophy: With Special Reference to Vyomaśivācārya* (Mysore: Prasaranga, 1979); and Karl H. Potter, *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1977), 425–53. In this vein, the references to Buddhists and Mīmāṁsikas also mirrors similar Śaiva Siddhānta philosophical positionings in exegesis and commentaries on ritual texts, such as Bhatta Ramakantha's commentary on Sadyojyotis's philosophical treatise *Nareśvaraparīkṣāprakāśa;* see Sanderson, "Śaiva Exegesis," 244. The phrase "elephant-like Buddhists" may be compared to a similarly intended verse from the *vṛtti* of Rānakaṇṭha on the *Maṭaṅgapārameśvarāgama,* quoted by Davis in *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 16, as follows: "Some have been won over by the Vedas, others by the views of Kaula, and still others by the Nyāya school. The willful elephant (*mataṅga*) has abandoned the path set out by Śaiva Siddhānta and celebrated by the best gurus, and has been led on a bad route. Therefore, put to the test by these other scholars, we have sought to refute the wrong views by striking them with the goad of this commentary, and to return the elephant onto the correct path." It seems, in this case, the reference is likely to Mātaṅga, referred to as an "elephant" as an indication of his status as a low-caste Caṇḍāla, who, according to a Buddhist *jataka* tale, achieved wisdom and eventually taught brāhmaṇas a lesson about caste. For the full story, see Edward Byles Cowell, *The Jātaka: Or, Stories of the Buddha's Former Births,* trans. W. H. D. Rouse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901), 235–44.

52. See, for example, Gerard Colas, "The Competing Hermeneutics of Image Worship in Hinduism (Fifth to Eleventh Century)," in *Images in Asian Religions: Texts and Contexts,* ed. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2004), 149–79.

53. Jabalpur stone inscription, verse 28, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 338.

54. Sanderson treats the problem of caste, and the disjuncture between the theory and practice of initiating individuals of inappropriate descent, in some detail in "Śaiva Age," 284–301.

55. As translated by Dominic Goodall and Robert Charles Zaehner, *Hindu Scriptures* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001), xxxi.

56. Many years ago, Johannes Bronkhorst referred to the two traditions of Indian asceticism: one that situated asceticism as a natural stage, or āśrama, in the life of a brāhmaṇical householder, and one that literally comprised an alternative path of remaining permanently in the stage of *dīkṣāśrama,* or the stage of life during which one lived permanently as a forest-dwelling ascetic after receiving initiation (dīkṣā) from a spiritual master. See Johannes Bronkhorst, *The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism* (Bern: P. Lang, 1993), and *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), chapter IIA.1. As Dominic Goodall has pointed out, the Śaiva Siddhāntins "were at pains to bring some of their doctrines into line with certain developments in *śāstric* thought that we can trace to the writings of quite different rivals: Mīmāṁsakas, Vedāntins, Vaisesikas, and Naiyayikas"; Goodall, *Parākhyatantram,* xlviii. See also Sanderson, "Saivism and the Tantric Traditions," and "Purity and Power among the Brāhmans of Kashmir," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History,* ed. M. Carruthers, S. Collins, and S. Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 190–216.

57. On yati-dharma, see particularly Patrick Olivelle, *Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), and *Rules and Regulations of Brahmanical Asceticism: Yatidharmasamuccaya of Yādava Prakāśa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

58. Chandrehe inscription, verse 10, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203. See also verse 3 of the Gurgī inscription and verse 7 of the Buḍhi Chanderī inscription.

59. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 9.

60. Ranod inscription, verse 67.

61. Gurgī inscription, verse 4, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 231.

62. Chandrehe inscription, verse 11, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203.

63. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 4. See also the Gwalior Museum inscription, verses 16, 20; and the Kadwāhā inscription, verse 13. On vows, see the Ranod inscription, verse 25; Gurgī inscription, verse 13; and Chandrehe inscription, verse 10. The gurus following in the Mattamayūra lineage remained celibate at least through the thirteenth century, at which point they may have transitioned, in some places and particularly in Andhra Pradesh, into a householding sect, through which possession of a monastery passed through hereditary blood lines rather than through spiritual lineages. See also Talbot, "Golakī Matha Inscriptions." As Gavin Flood has noted in *Tantric Body,* 144, the *Mṛgendrāgama* defines an observer of a vow (*vrata*) as "someone who has given up meat, women, and honey (possibly fermented beverage), who sleeps on the ground and is solitary, carrying a pot for water. He must avoid young women, garlands and similar things."

64. Gurgī inscription, verse 13.

65. For an overview of stages of initiation in Śaiva Siddhānta, see Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe;* and Flood, *Tantric Body,* chap. 6. See also Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," 660–704.

66. Ranod inscription, verse 37. See also the Kadwāhā inscription, verse 10.

67. Kadwāhā inscription, verse 7.

CHAPTER 3. FROM HERMIT'S HUT TO GURU'S MANSION

1. The tension between world renunciation and householder life has a very old history, both in Indian textual sources and in twentieth-century studies. See especially Thapar, "Renunciation"; J. C. Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual, and Renouncer," in *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kinship, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 26–44; Patrick Olivelle, *Renunciation in Hinduism: A Medieval Debate* (Vienna: Institut für Indologie der Universität Wien, 1986); and Bronkhorst, *Two Sources*. On the problems endemic to an ascetic architecture, see Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "The Hermit's Hut: A Study in Asceticism and Architecture" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002), esp. 179–83, 198–99.

2. I borrow the term "fort-like" from Misra, "Religion in a Disorganized Milieu," 69–70; see also Misra, "Śaivite Monasteries," 108.

3. George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962), 39–52.

4. The codes of conduct and order of daily rituals are usually laid out in the *Caryāpāda* and *Kriyāpāda,* respectively, of *Śaiva Āgama* texts. In thinking about the relationship between architecture and ritual life, I am indebted to Thomas Mathews's effort, many years ago, to recapture the liturgy of early Byzantine churches as the "colorful, vibrant, and fascinating" life of "the ceremonial movement which the building was created to shelter," in *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), 3.

5. On medieval codes of conduct in the Christian and Buddhist worlds, see Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages;* Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries;* and Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*. In the case of Buddhism, the importance of living by a code was reinforced through the annual recitation of the core set of rules, contained within a section known as the *Pātimokkha,* in front of the entire community of monks who congregated together during the rainy season.

6. On the dating of early *Āgamas,* see Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 12–19; and Goodall, *Parākhyatantram,* intro. The weight of the guru's oral teachings is emphasized in the *Śaṭsāhasra Saṃhitā* (2.15), which notes: "What is stated in a Śāstra, or explained (orally) by a Guru, that has authority in that particular text, valid for every way of thinking." See J. A. Schoterman, *The Ṣaṭsāhasra Saṃhitā: Chapters 1–5* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982), 74.

7. Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought,* 254, 262, 272. On the spatialization of the everyday, see Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); and Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991). A few more specific considerations of architecture and daily life in modern and more recent historical contexts include Deborah Berke and Steven Harris, eds., *Architecture of the Everyday* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997); Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds., *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); and Dell Upton, "Architecture in Everyday Life," *New Literary History* 33, no. 4 (2002): 707–723. More appropriate in this case would be social archaeology, a field whose literature is too vast to cite in its entirety, but which can be accessed summarily in Lynn Meskell and Robert W. Preucel, eds., *A Companion to Social Archaeology* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004).

8. *Imperial Gazetteer of India: Central India,* 12 (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1908), 140, 181. Current population numbers for Ranod and Kadwāhā are taken from the 2001 census of India. Earlier population figures were published in *Gwalior State Gazetteer* (*The Central India State Gazetteer*) (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1908), 1, 27, 247.

9. Kadwāhā inscription, verses 6–7.

10. Kadwāhā inscription, verse 12. It is important to note that what I propose here is a significant departure from earlier theories, the earliest of which associated Kadwāhā with Kadambaguhādivāsin in as far back as the seventh century, and the more recent of which associates it with Purandara. See Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353; and R. N. Misra, "Art and Architecture of Gopādri Region—Early Phase (Seventh to Tenth Century)," in *Sahṛidaya: Studies in Indian and South East Asian Art in Honour of Dr. R. Nagaswamy,* ed. Bettina Baumer et al. (Chennai: Tamil Arts Academy), 238, 240, 243, 245; and Misra, "Shaiva Siddhānta." For the description of Harirāja's visit, see the Kadwāhā fragmentary inscription, verses 22–34.

11. The battlements particularly became a familiar fixture on Sultanate and later Mughal era palaces, fortresses, and mosques, as seen not only in Delhi but also in Mandu, the seat of the sultans of Mālavā. See Michael Brand, "Sultanate of Malwa," in *The Architecture of the Indian Sultanates,* ed. Alka Patel and Abha Narain Lambah (Mumbai: Marg, on behalf of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2006).

12. It is notable that Cunningham does not mention Bījasen Devī, as it was his practice to report on current ritual activity or local legends or histories at archaeological sites. See, for example, Cunningham's numerous references to local histories and local annalists in the same report that contains his account of Ranod (*CASIR* [1862–65]: 342, 386, 398–99, 441, 445). Another good example is Cunningham's evocative description of a Buddhist stūpa at nearby Rājapur, known at the time as Kothīla Math and attached to a legend of a sinful brother-sister marriage, made in error, by two orphaned *banjāras,* in *CASIR* (1884–85): 178–79.

13. For example, see Tamara Sears, "Encountering Ascetics."

14. The stairs themselves appear to have been angled slightly downward, possibly also to facilitate the flow of water.

15. As noted also by Alexander Cunningham in *CASIR* (1871): 303–304.

16. This mode of roof construction may have served as the real architectural referent for the corrugated surfaces of the chādya roofing that was commonly seen

above temple niches and walls and above pillared walls and courtyards.

17. For a discussion of the emergence of Kadwāhā as a temple town, see Tamara Sears, "Building Beyond the Temple," 123–52; and *EITA* 2, pt. 1, 158–60.

18. On the similar use of multiple types of blocks at other sites, see Krishna Deva, "Jaina Art and Architecture Under the Candellas," in *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture,* ed. Umakant Shah and Madhusudan Dhaky (Ahmedabad: L. D. Institute of Indology, 1975), 257–68.

19. *Mayamatam* 30.43, translation by Dagens, 695. The *Mānasāra* (38.50–54) is even more restrictive, in prescribing that doors of all people, including brāmaṇas and kings, be situated to the left of the median axis, and allowing only for temple doorways to be placed in the center.

20. On the decoration of doorframes, see *Mayamatam* 30.26–32.

21. Colin Richards, "The Late Neolithic House in Orkney," in *The Social Archaeology of Houses,* ed. Ross Samson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), 111–24. See also Mike Parker Pearson and Colin Richards, "Ordering the World: Perceptions of Architecture, Space and Time," in *Architecture and Order*. This kind of way of looking at architecture has a long history within the Indian subcontinent, stemming back through Mircea Eliade to Stella Kramrisch, who describes a Hindu temple sanctum in terms of the pillar of the universe. See Kramrisch, *Hindu Temple,* 1:175–76; and Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959), 32–38, 50–54. See also Michael W. Meister, "Development of a Morphology," 33–50, and "De- and Re-Constructing the Indian Temple," *Art Journal* 49, no. 4 (1990): 395–400.

22. Milk is commonly used for oblations in so many Hindu contexts that it is impossible to cite all cases in full. Representative examples of the use of milk in Śaiva Siddhānta ritual include Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 145; and Helene Brunner, "Maṇḍala and Yantra in the Siddhānta," in Bühnemann, *Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions,* 162. On the use of both cow and goat milk in other Indian ritual contexts, see Jan E. M. Houben, ed., *The Pravargya Brāhmaṇa of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka: An Ancient Commentary on the Pravargya Ritual* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), 74–77.

23. Their dimensions are 4.1 by 2 feet (1.2 by 0.6 meters), rather than the 5.1 by 2.5 feet (1.5 by 0.8 meters) employed for most rooms and 5.4 by 2.8 feet (1.7 by 0.9 meters) for the main entrance. Interestingly, the *Mayamatam* (30.1–11a) prescribes at least twenty-five possible dimensions for doorframes, according to function, both within a house and for annexes surrounding a house. The largest doors are prescribed for palaces, settlements, and temples. The smallest are for private chambers, such as bedrooms.

24. This doorway has been, in more recent years and likely for the purposes of safety, filled with stone slabs.

25. I discuss the problems with the dating of the monastery's third story in "Fortified Maṭhas and Fortress Mosques: The Transformation and Reuse of Hindu Monastic Sites in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," *Archives of Asian Art* 59 (2009): 22–23.

26. In addition to the story recounted in the fragmentary inscription, as discussed earlier in this chapter and elsewhere in the book, several other records from Kadwāhā mention the Pratīhāras of Buḍhi Chanderī. For the broader record, see Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 112–13; and Singh, "Inscriptions from Kadwaha," 229–39.

27. Ranod inscription, verse 29.

28. Ibid., verse 30.

29. Ibid., verses 43–44. Vyomaśiva's inscription contains a somewhat cryptic description of his temple(s) as containing images of Śiva, Umā-Devī, and Gaṇeśa, which likely refers to the three *pārśva-devatās* (supporting divinities) found in the *bhadras* (main niches) of a single temple, rather than the main icons of three different temples. For more on the logic of temple programs in central India, see Darielle Mason, "A Sense of Time and Place: Style and Architectural Disposition of Images on the North Indian Temple," in Desai and Mason, *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers,* 116–38; Mason, "Reintegrating the Cosmos: North Indic Temple Fragments," in *Fashioning the Divine: South Asian Sculpture at the Ackland Art Museum,* ed. Pika Ghosh (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Ackland Art Museum/University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2006), 77–93; and Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period.*

30. Gwalior Museum inscription, verses 28–40. It is notable that the praises of Patañgaśambhu's step-well resonate with the text at Ranod, and it seems as if the author, or at the very least the commissioning agent, was very familiar with the previous text.

31. Unfortunately, its provenance was not recorded when it was first noted by Hiranand Sastri in *ASIAR* (1903–1904): 287–88. Several suggestions have been made as to the provenance of this inscription, including Ranod (Mirashi and Shastri, "Fragmentary Stone Inscription," 8) and Kadwāhā or Ranod (Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 113). Ranod simply seems the most likely location, in part because of the fluidity of the transition from Vyomaśiva to Patañgaśambhu, and in part because of the correspondence in architectural materials. The only significant problem is a brief mention of Patañgaśambhu having acquired the place where he built his many monuments "by his own arms" (verse 39), a phrasing that might indicate a newly established location. However, such phrasing could also refer to the metaphorical emergence of the sage as the new head guru who, after taking ownership of the site, embarked on a project of architectural expansion. See also Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum," 8.

32. A good comparison to the niche style can found in the lower figures on Śiva Temple 1 at Surwāyā (see Chapter 4). On doorframe figures, see Kramrisch, *Hindu Temple,* 2:313–17; and Mason, "A Sense of Time," 84–85.

33. Ranod inscription, verses 43, 65, 51.

34. Ibid., verses 52–53.

35. It was fairly common to find sarvatobhadra shines in the middle of a stepped well in many regions of India. For more on Baroli, see L. K. Tripathi, *The Temples at Baroli* (Varanasi: Amitābha Prakāśana, 1975). For more on step-wells, see Julia Hegewald, *Water Architecture*

in South Asia: A Study of Types, Developments, and Meanings (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Morna Livingston, *Steps to Water* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002); Jutta Jain-Neubauer, *The Step Wells of Gujarat: In Art Historical Perspective* (Delhi: Abhinav, 1981); and Kirit Mankodi, *The Queen's Stepwell at Patan* (Bombay: Project for Indian Cultural Studies, 1991). Unfortunately, no foundation markings survive above ground that could verify the location of the temple(s) without excavation. However, I have noted elsewhere ("Fortified Maṭhas") at least two precedents for retaining the structure and orientation of a preexisting monastic site, following its conversion into an Islamicate fortress or settlement. In both cases, a mosque was built either on top of a buried temple or against the facade of a converted temple.

36. This was a dialogue that was also enacted through temple architecture at nearby central Indian sites. In the case of temple architecture, the emulation of a wooden surface evoked the notion of an open-air pavilion in the forest housing a Śiva-liṅga, which was in line with Śiva's instructions imparted to the sages at the Dāruvana. For examples in central India, see Michael W. Meister, "Symbol and Surface: Masonic and Pillared Wall-Structures in North India," *Artibus Asiae* 46, no. 1/2 (January 1, 1985): 129–48, and "Construction and Conception: Maṇḍapikā Shrines of Central India," *East and West* 26, no. 3/4 (1976): 409–18.

37. Adam Hardy, "Drāvida Temples in the Samarāṅganasūtradhāra," *South Asian Studies* 25, no. 1 (January 2009): 41–62.

38. I use the terms "icon," "index," and "symbol" as utilized strictly in semiotics, as laid out first by Charles Sanders Pierce in "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in *Philosophical Writings of Peirce,* ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover, 1955), 98–119. "Index," in this sense, indicates a causal relationship, insofar as architecture comes into being through human action, explicitly for the purposes of housing a human body. For other perspectives on the relationship between architecture and the body, see George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, eds., *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002). The subject of movement in architecture has a long historiography, going back to Stella Kramrisch's notion of the temple as manifestation, and sculpture as creating patterns of movement across the temple walls, as articulated at length in *The Hindu Temple.* For more recent discussions of movement in architecture, especially in the context of precolonial India, see Hardy, "Expression of Movement in Architecture," 471–97; Pinna Indorf, "Interpreting the Hindu Temple Form: A Model Based on Its Conceptualization as a Formal Expression of Measured Movement," *Artibus Asiae* 64, no. 2 (January 1, 2004): 177–211; and Crispin Branfoot, "Approaching the Temple in Nayaka-Period Madurai: The Kūṭal Aḻakar Temple," *Artibus Asiae* 60, no. 2 (January 1, 2000): 197–221. Here, I find it particularly useful to think, in general terms, through forms of spatial analysis introduced originally by Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson in the 1970s and 1980s and popularized through the seminal publication of *The Social Logic of Space.* For a more recent reconsideration of the applicability of the theory, see Sonit Bafna, "Space Syntax: A Brief Introduction to Its Logic and Analytical Techniques," *Environment and Behavior* 35, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 17–29. For applications within archaeological contexts, see Pearson and Richards, *Architecture and Order;* and Samson, *Social Archaeology of Houses.*

39. *CASIR* (1862–65): 303–305.

40. The interior dimensions of the central room of the monastery are 23 by 21.3 feet (7 by 6.5 meters), and the exterior dimensions would have been between 28.5 and 28.9 feet (8.7 and 8.8 meters). The exterior extents of the tomb's foundation markings are 28.9 by 28.9 feet (8.8 by 8.8 meters) square.

41. It is worth noting that if the current foundations of the tomb once marked the site of a temple maṇḍapa, which is likely for reasons that will be discussed further in Chapter 4, then the spacing of the pillars may have also been aligned with the spacing of the pillars in the entrance portico to the temple. Unfortunately, this system of proportions does not correspond to any known textual tradition associated with the construction of monasteries, as there are very few sources that detail this topic. In the cases where prescriptions are given, they seem to be associated with Buddhists or Jains and bear little resemblance to what is seen here. In the *Mayamatam,* for example, the following prescriptions are given for the construction of a monastery, described in the text as a *vihāraśala*: "The length of the principal (main building) is triple the dimensions chosen for the width; other buildings are to be added to it, lengthwise, whose length is double the width (chosen initially), until the monastery's total length is twenty-two times the chosen width; there are then eleven buildings in all. (Each main building) has a porch on its front façade and is decorated with square and elongated outwork constructions and with false dormer windows. There is a verandah at the back; or else, (each main building) has two gables and resembles a *garbhakūṭa.* It has one, two, three or more stories; there are various projecting elements in front and behind. A monastery is to be built like a temple" (chap. 26, verses 200–202; translation by Dagens, 565).

42. Miller and Wertz detail the division of labor in *Hindu Monastic Life,* 141. Alexis Sanderson similarly recounts a medieval passage in the *Naimittikakarmānusandhana,* which describes the keeping of slaves and other menial workers in the context of laying out the rules for inheritance after the death of a head guru. See Sanderson, "The Śaiva Religion Among the Khmers," 396–97.

43. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 36–38, 92–94; and Sanderson, "Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions," 128–72. Details concerning japa and other ritual actions can be found in the Buḍhi Chanderī inscription (verse 9); concerning vows, in the inscriptions from Ranod (verse 25) and Gurgī (verse 13); and concerning celibacy, in the inscription from Ranod (verse 67), Gurgī (verse 13), and Chandrehe (verse 10).

44. A particularly eloquent exposition of the process according to the *Kāmikāgama* can be found in Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 104–109; quote

from 108. A translation is available in an appendix of Richard H. Davis's dissertation, "Ritual in an Oscillating Universe" (PhD, University of Chicago, 1986).

45. As noted also below, the inscription from Gurgī describes the sage Praśāntaśiva as follows: "Seated in a solitary place he,—who had mastered (*all*) the *āsanas*, who felt the inner joy with his steady mind absorbed in the meditation of Śiva seated in the midst of the lotus of the heart, and who was fond of making gifts,—passed his days in the company of meritorious persons who were adept in the philosophy of the Pāñcārthika system and were capable of examining (*other systems*)" (verse 15, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, 232). It seems likely here that the description of the sage as "absorbed in the meditation of Śiva in the lotus of the heart" is a specific reference to ātmaśuddi.

46. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 104. See also Flood, *Tantric Body*, 138–43.

47. Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers*, 50–51.

48. The *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* describes two types of baths for purification, known as Vāruṇa and Āgneya, the first of which was to be taken with cold water, following the principles laid out in the Dharmasūtras, and the second of which consisted of smearing the body with ash, preferably from the sacred fire. See the *Sāmānyapāda*, ninth paṭala; and Sastri and Unni, *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati*, cxcii. Some texts also mention as many as eight baths. See Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers*. The highly ritualized and prescriptive nature of bathing comes through quite clearly in other textual sources as well. The *Kriyāpāda* of the *Mṛgendrāgama* goes into some detail, first outlining seven baths briefly and then treating each in more detail. The overview presented (in French) by Hélène Brunner-Lachaux can be roughly translated as follows: "(1) The water bath (*vāruṇa-snāna*) is taken with water cleared of obstacles, and purified by [the mantra of] Śiva. It comes with a sprinkling (*abhiṣeka*) and retention [of breath] (*saṃyama*), and is preceded by commonly prescribed acts. (2) The [bath] of fire (*ānala-snāna*) is made with ash, using a technique they say. It relates to [the faithful] that are already purified by water. (3) The [bath] of wind (*ānila-snāna*) occurs at a place [where there is a] wind load of beneficial dust, such as that [raised] by cows. (4) The [bath] of Earth (*pārthiva-snāna*) should be taken with pure earth that has been affected by excellent [or sacred] water, such as water from the Ganges. (5) The [bath] of sky (*nābhasa-snāna*), should be taken with a mixture of rain and sun. (6) The bath 'of the guru' (*gaurava-snāna*) is done by touching one's head at the lotus feet of the head guru. (7) The bath of the mind (*mānasa-snāna*) is called 'Śakti'" (*Kriyāpāda*, 2.1–6). These passages have been translated into French by Brunner-Lachaux, *Mṛgendrāgama*, 17–18.

49. It seems safe to assume that the bathing chambers within the monastery were, at the very least, likely intended to facilitate the vāruṇa-snāna, or water bath. In terms of the technicality of construction, it is worth noting that the proportions vary from case to case. At Ranod, the ratios of length to width were approximately 3.11–3.19 (each chamber measured between 23.13–23.16 feet [7.05–7.06 meters] by 7.25–7.41 feet [2.21–2.26 meters]). At Kadwāhā, the ratios of length to width were as follows: in Room 18, the ratio was 2.5 (precise measurements: 21.62 by 8.60 feet [6.59 by 2.62 meters]), and in Room 23 the ratio was 2.0 (precise measurements: 18.80 by 9.42 feet [5.73 by 2.87 meters]).

50. For example, see the sections on ritual purification in the *Kriyākramadyotikā;* a translation of the relevant passage can be found in Richard Davis's doctoral dissertation, "Ritual in an Oscillating Universe," 244.

51. Sanderson, "Meaning in Tantric Ritual," 28. Sanderson additionally notes that the rite was to be performed at one or more of the *saṃdhyās* (sunrise, midday, and sunset).

52. Hélène Brunner makes this point as a distinction between Śaiva Siddhānta and its Non-Dualist contemporaries in "Maṇḍala and Yantra in the Siddhānta," 158. See also Sanderson, "Śaiva Exegesis," 238.

53. See N. P. Unni, "Introduction," to Sastri and Unni, *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati*, cclxxix–ccxxiv. See also *Mayamatam*, chap. 33.

54. For example, the Ranod inscription describes the sage Hṛdayaśiva as one who "adorned the places of his own guru, accepting worthy students" (verse 20). Similarly, in the inscription from Gurgī, the Mattamayūra lineage is more broadly described as the place "where appeared the first best ascetics whose minds were restrained by *vows*, (and) who taught the *great and flawless doctrine of Śiva to their disciples;* whose well-known fame, having the bright luster of nectar, even now whitens the universe, delighted the prosperous and learned men even as moonlight does the assemblage of night-lotuses" (verse 4, translation by Mirashi, 231).

55. See *Caryāpāda* 1.66–67 in the *Mṛgendrāgama*, translated from Sanskrit into French by Brunner-Lachaux. The English translation given here is from Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 28.

56. See *Caryāpāda* 1.29–65, in Brunner-Lachaux, *Mṛgendrāgama*, 361–76.

57. The *Mṛgendrāgama*, for example, lays out many stipulations concerning potential causes of interruptions, which include anything from the odor of partially cremated bodies to the wafting in of a strong wind. See, for example, *Caryāpāda* 1.57–59. See also Lal Dubey, *Aparājitapṛcchā: A Critical Study* (Allahabad: Lakshmi, 1987), 188; and Prasanna Acharya, *A Dictionary of Hindu Architecture: Treating of Sanskrit Architectural Terms, with Illustrative Quotations from Silpāśāstras, General Literature, and Archaeological Records* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 612–14.

58. Bilhāri inscription, verse 84.

59. See, for example, Alexis Sanderson, "Ritual for Oneself and Ritual for Others," in *Body, Performance, Agency, and Experience*, ed. Angelos Chaniotis, Silke Leopold, Hendrik Schulze, Eric Venbrux, Thomas Quartier, Joanna Wojtkowiak, Jan Weinhold, and Geoffrey Samuel (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 14. This issue is discussed also in greater detail in Chapter 2.

60. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verses 5, 17. Although initiation was enough to liberate the soul (Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 4), meditation was also the means to final rest, and a number of inscriptions describe the death and final liberation of a Mattamayūra ācāryas as being achieved through yoga and meditation (Kadwāhā inscription, verse 10; Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 5; Gurgī inscription, verse 5; and Bilhāri inscription, verse 53). When combined with austerities and meditation, this could give an ascetic practitioner special or miraculous powers. At Chandrehe, the sage Prabodhaśiva "realized God by the performance of religious austerities and meditation" (Chandrehe inscription, verse 11).

61. See, for example, Gurgī inscription, verse 15.

62. Goodall, *Parākhyatantram,* 109, 347.

63. Somadeva Vasudeva, *The Yoga of Mālinīvijayottaratantra: Chapters 1–4, 7–11, 11–17* (Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry; École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2004), 250–51. In addition, Vasudeva included the following prescriptions from texts concerning ideal places for performing yoga: "a quiet, pleasant cave or earthen hut free from all obstructions" (*Mālinīvijayottaratantram*); "a cave or inaccessible spot on a mountain, in a Śaiva temple or in a house or in an auspicious site" (*Kiraṇatantra*); a "secluded, level, clean, agreeable and remote" place "free from all obstructions" (*Matańgapārameśvara*); and "a secluded spot frequented by Yogins, avoiding areas that have been damaged by malevolent sorcerers (kīlita) or are guarded" (*Svāyambhuvasūtrasaṅgraha*) (247–51).

64. Verse 4; Goodall, *Parākhyatantram,* 109, 348.

65. Verse 61; ibid., 54–55.

66. Prasanna Acharya, *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Architecture,* Mānasāra 7 (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), 64; *Garuḍa Purāṇa,* chap. 46, 14–19.

67. Dubey, *Aparājitapṛcchā;* see also M. A. Dhaky, "The Influence of the *Samarāṅgaṇa Sūtradhāra* on the *Aparājitapṛcchā,*" *Journal of the Oriental Institute* 10, no. 3 (1961): 226–34; and Popatbhai Ambashankar Mankad, trans., *Aparājitapṛcchā of Bhuvanadeva* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1947).

68. Implements for oblations included a long-handled spoon carved out of wood with a circular pit at one end (*sruva*) and special sticks to kindle sacred fire, which usually consisted of two pieces made of two types of wood (*araṇi*). Sastri and Unni, *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati,* ccxlv–ccxlvi, cclviii.

69. This is true in many cases in India today, as I learned while living with the Upadhyaya family near Assi Ghat in Banāras in 1994–95. The family's two cows, Mukta and Muni, were kept in the open court adjacent to my room.

70. It may be notable that, in both cases, the room that seems the most likely candidate for the monastery's feeding hall was positioned in what would have been, at the time of their initial construction, the northeastern corner of the monastic complex; at Kadwāhā, this was also a place that stood closest to the temple sanctum.

71. On the monastery's role as a center for charitable feeding (*sattra*), see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* clviii; and Pantulu, "Malkāpuram Stone-Pillar." For comparative modern examples, see Swami Swahananda, ed., *Monasteries in South India* (Hollywood, Calif.: Vedanta, 1990), 18–20, 67, 72.

72. Ranod inscription, verse 67. The prohibition against beds resonates with the *nibandha* literature pertaining to *yatidharma,* or the *dharma* of ascetics, wherein ascetics are forbidden from using couches, covering the body with anything more elaborate than an antelope skin or grass, and instructed explicitly to sleep on the ground. See, for example, the *Yatidharmasamuccaya* 3.3, 9.22, 6.286.

73. In describing the daily bath, Śaiva Siddhānta texts make careful note of a hierarchy of water sources, as not all water was considered equally auspicious. Water associated with rivers, pools, and large ponds was far superior to well water or water stored in a vessel, although any water taken from the vicinity of a Śiva temple was deemed holy, and ideally practitioners should take their baths in a pond or river. See, for example, Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers,* 52–53. See also Sastri and Unni, *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati, Kriyāpāda* 3–4. The relevant sections are summarized in the new introduction to the text by N. P. Unni in the reprint of the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati,* ccxxxv–ccxxxviii.

CHAPTER 4. EXPANDING ARENAS OF DEVOTION

Epigraph. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 9.

1. *ASIPRWC* (1915–16): 11.

2. *ASIAR* (1915–16): 7–8.

3. M. B. Garde, *A Guide to Surwaya* (Gwalior: The Archaeological Department, Gwalior Government, 1919).

4. Surwāyā's suitability for big-game hunting is recorded in tourist guides. See *Madhya Pradesh* (Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1958), 34–35. For records of visitors, see *GAR* (1924–25): 19; *GAR* (1928–29): 19; *GAR* (1935–36): sec. 9, par. 5; and *GAR* (1937–38): 17. The 1933 reprint is listed as having been added to the library in the 1935 issue of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (625). Copies of the 1939 reprint can be found at the Ancient India and Iranian Trust in the United Kingdom; Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, Virginia); and the Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire (Lausanne, Switzerland).

5. *ASIAR* (1915–16): 7–8. Garde's 1919 *Guide to Surwaya* treated the temples in particular detail, dispensing with the monastery in less than one hundred words before extolling the temples' many features, including the exquisite carving of pillars, brackets, architraves, and ceilings (10).

6. *ASIAR* (1915–16): 7–8.

7. *GAR* (1927–28): 5.

8. *ASIPRWC* (1915): 16, 11; *GAR* (1942–46): 15.

9. The inscriptions are cataloged in Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 121–22; *ARE* (1954–55 B): no. 254; and *ARE* (1961–62C): nos. 1605–1608. See also H. V. Trivedi, "Surwāyā Stone Inscription of the Time of Gopāladeva," in his *Inscriptions,* 591–94; and Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 18–20. For further discussion of the dating of this

fortress, see Sears, "Fortified Maṭhas," 20–21.

10. The term "Sarasvatīpaṭṭana" is found in a stone inscription dating AD 1285 (VS 1341), and commissioned during the era of Gopāladeva (Trivedi, "Surwāyā Stone Inscription," 591–94; 593, verse 4).

11. Compare, for example, the image of Gaṇeśa in the center of the door lintel with the Telī-kā Mandir in Gwalior, and, further afield at Roda in Gujarat, in *EITA* 2, pt. 2, 15–17, 337–60, pls. 16–25.

12. The assessment provided in *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 17–18, appears to be correct.

13. Here, two details are worth noting. The first is that one of the pilasters of Room 10 covers a window in the eastern facade of the original monastic dwelling. The second is that it is unclear whether it was possible to pass between Rooms 10 and 13. Two courses of the wall that was put in as a divider are still present in situ, but it is unclear whether or not (1) an opening existed to allow passage between the two rooms, or (2) the dividing wall was original or a later imposition.

14. See, for example, the Śiva temple at Kuchdon (*EITA* 2, pt. 3, 18). Well-preserved examples of miniature sarvatobhadra-prāsādas can be found at the Archaeological Museum in Gwalior.

15. For example, see Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* 4:xxx, 380–89.

16. *CASIR* (1884–85): 177–78; *ASIAR* (1914–15): 20–21; *GAR* (1934–35): 6; and M. B. Garde, *Archaeology in Gwalior* (Gwalior: Alijah Darbar, 1934), 129. Following Cunningham, Garde also dated the monuments to the tenth and eleventh centuries, although the Śiva shrine more likely belongs to the early ninth century. The monasteries at both Kadwāhā and Terāhī remained unknown even to Kielhorn, who noted, in his edition of the Ranod inscription, that the "Terambi" mentioned in the inscription might be equivalent to "Terahi, which is five miles to the south-east of Ranod." He identified the Kadambaguhā of the inscription with Kadwāhā, which he knew as the site of "four standing temples and the ruins of nine others"; see Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353. On the correct dating of the monuments at Terāhī, see *EITA* 2, pt. 2, 36–39; *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 27–29; Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period,* 121–25; and Willis, *Temples of Gopakṣetra,* 68, 81.

17. F. Kielhorn, "Two Inscriptions from Terahi, [Vikrama-] Samvat 960," *IA* 17 (1888): 201–202; and Willis, *Inscriptions,* 2.

18. The suggestion that Terāhī was Terambi was made originally by Kielhorn in 1892 ("Stone Inscription from Ranod," 353) and later refuted by Mirashi on the basis of the assumption that the sage Purandara came to the region from afar ("Śaiva Ācāryas," 1–16; 2–3).

19. On the balsam or balsamine, see George Bentham and Joseph Dalton Hooker, *Handbook of the British Flora: A Description of the Flowering Plants and Ferns Indigenous to, or Naturalized in, the British Isles; For the Use of Beginners and Amateurs* (London: L. Reeve, 1887), 95–96. The *ter* or *tera* tree referred to more frequently in present-day India, and particularly the northeast, takes its name not from the Sanskrit but from the Latin *terminus,* after which its genus, *terminalia,* is named. Another possible meaning may be related to a goddess, ter-Ambi, standing in for Ambika, who is mentioned in a hero stone from Terāhī dating to VS 920, mentioned in *CASIR* (1884–85): 177. On the use of Madhuveṇī, see Kielhorn, "Two Inscriptions," 201.

20. Although pillars are notoriously difficult to date, these compare most easily in the nearby region with those used in eighth- and ninth-century temples at sites such as Mahuā and Batesar, as well as, most notably, with the pillars in the interior of the sanctum of the Śiva temple at Terāhī. For example, see *EITA* 2, pt. 1, pls. 275, 314–15, 425, 428, 431, 639; and Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period,* 32–33, pls. 37, 39. Their use here is very different from the case at Menāl, where older pillars were reused in the construction of a twelfth-century monastery. On Menāl, see Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes"; and *EITA* 2, pt. 2, 283–84. For other cases in which old pillars have been put meaningfully to new use, see Finbarr B. Flood, "Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the Past in Sultanate Delhi," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* no. 43 (April 1, 2003): 95–116; Phillip B. Wagoner and John Henry Rice, "From Delhi to the Deccan: Newly Discovered Tughluq Monuments at Warangal-Sulṭānpur and the Beginnings of Indo-Islamic Architecture in Southern India," *Artibus Asiae* 61, no. 1 (January 1, 2001): 77–117; and Alka Patel, "Expanding the Ghurid Architectural Corpus East of the Indus: The Jāgeśvara Temple at Sādaḍi, Rajasthan," *Archives of Asian Art* 59, no. 1 (2009): 33–56.

21. Although I have not been able to make an exact match, there are similarities between the pillars at Terāhī and other tenth-century sites in the area. See, for example, *EITA* 2, pt. 3, pls. 195, 208, 408, 470.

22. Alexis Sanderson has pointed out that Śaiva texts frequently concern themselves with temple building rather than rituals following the actual construction of temples, thus implying that a different category of priest was responsible for the performance of daily rites. However, as he notes, texts often lagged behind actual practices, and it was likely that Śaiva gurus did in fact take on that responsibility. It is worth noting that daily rituals may not have been emphasized, since acting as a temple priest was not typically a sign of elevated status. See Sanderson, "Ritual for Oneself," 16.

23. Buḍhi Chanderī inscription, verse 9.

24. For a detailed accounting of the role of the Śaiva ācāryas as priest, particularly in relationship to other brāhmaṇical practitioners, particularly in the context of royal religious patronage, see Sanderson's "Religion and the State," and "Śaiva Age," 273–76.

25. See for example, Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 40; and Sanderson, "Śaiva Exegesis," 237–38.

26. Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers,* 4–5; and Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 40–41.

27. The distinction between rites performed for others (*parārthapūja*) and for oneself (*ārmārthapūja*) are made explicit in many Śaiva Siddhānta ritual texts. More specifically, texts make it clear that to perform nityapūjā, a worshipper must receive samayadīkṣā "with seed"

(*sabīja*). Women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and others who were incapable of producing "seed" could receive a lesser initiation that was "without seed." See Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 40–51; and Flood, *Tantric Body,* chap. 6.

28. The corpus of literature on the meaning of the formal and symbolic functions of the liṅga is too large to cite in its entirety here. A basic overview can be found in Kramrisch, *Presence of Siva,* 162–78.

29. See *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 17–21.

30. Garde, in his *Guide to Surwaya,* also noted that these temples were once accompanied by a larger group, still traceable only through sculptural fragments, that was arranged under his supervision into an open-air museum for the benefit of visitors to the site. Garde speculated that this niche may have contained a foundation inscription for the well (12). At least two such inscriptions, recording the foundation of wells, were recovered from the vicinity of the village of Surwāyā, dated to AD 1285 (VS 1341) and AD 1292 (VS 1348), respectively, but these are significantly later than the monastic site. See Kielhorn, "Sarwaya Stone Inscription of Ganapati of Nalapura, of the (Vikrama) year 1348," *IA* 12 (March 1893): 82; and Trivedi, "Surwāyā Stone Inscription," 591–94.

31. On the dating of the temple, see *EITA* 2, pt. 2, 36–39.

32. Alexis Sanderson makes this point in "Śaiva Exegesis," 238–39. In his case, he is concerned with larger, royally sponsored sites, where "the deity became individualized for legal purposes . . . by the prefixing of the name of the donor to–*īśvara* . . . thus allowing it to be treated in law as the owner of the benefactions in the form of land-revenue and other valuables that would sustain the cult."

33. Mirashi, "Śaiva Ācāryas," 13–14; Sharma, *Kalachuris and Their Times,* 196–202; Prasanna-Kumarā Ācārya, *Dictionary of Hindu Architecture, Treating of Sanskrit Architectural Terms, with Illustrative Quotations from Silpasastras, General Literature and Archæological Records* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 463–67; Pantulu, "Malkāpuram Stone-Pillar"; and J. Van Troy, "The Social Structure of the Śaiva-Siddhāntika Ascetics (700–1300 AD)," *Indica* 2, no. 2 (1974): 77–86.

34. Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* vol. 4.

35. Chandrehe inscription, verse 16; Gurgī inscription, verse 22.

36. Ranod inscription, verses 52, 47. See also verses 51–53, 58, 61.

37. Jain-Neubauer, *The Step Wells of Gujarat,* 10. On terms used in water architecture, see also Hegewald, *Water Architecture;* Livingston, *Steps to Water;* and Mankodi, *Queen's Stepwell.*

38. Such was likely the case in the Gwalior Museum inscription, verses 38 and 40.

39. Inscriptions make reference to the flags that once adorned temples, including those at monastic sites. For example, see the Bilhāri inscription, verses 40–41. Similarly, archaeologists have noted the presence of ancient flagstones set into the stone pavement surrounding early medieval temples. See *GAR* (1939–40): 9, paragraph 23r, on conservation activities at Kadwāhā's temples.

40. Ranod inscription, verse 66.

41. For example, see *GAR* (1939–40): 9, paragraph 23a.

42. Ranod inscription, verse 43.

43. Gwalior Museum inscription, verse 40. The term used here for garden or orchard is "*vāṭa*" or "*vāṭaka.*"

44. The most successful attempts to archaeologically trace gardens in medieval India have been in substantially later Mughal contexts. See James Wescoat and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds., *Mughal Gardens: Sources, Places, Representations, and Prospects* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996).

45. Daud Ali, "Gardens in Early Indian Court Life," *Studies in History* 19, no. 2 (August 1, 2003): 221–52. See also Daud Ali and Emma J. Flatt, eds., *Garden and Landscape Practices in Precolonial India: Histories from the Deccan* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2010). For more on watercourses in religious contexts, see Willis, *Archaeology of Hindu Ritual,* chap. 1; Hegewald, *Water Architecture;* and Julia Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India: Sanchi Hill and Archaeologies of Religious and Social Change, c. Third Century BC to Fifth Century AD* (London: British Association for South Asian Studies, The British Academy, 2007). Although the term used for garden was "*ārāma,*" literally indicating a place for "delight," Gregory Schopen has usefully noted that the Sanskrit word for gardener ("*ārāmika*") is also used in early Buddhist sources to indicate lay menial laborers employed in the service of the monastery, in "The Buddhist 'Monastery' and the Indian Garden: Aesthetics, Assimilations, and the Siting of Monastic Establishments," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126, no. 4 (October 1, 2006): 487–505. This observation resonates well with Sanderson's note on different categories of laborers in the *Naimittikakarmānusandhana,* composed by Brahmaśambhu of the Karkaroṇī branch of the Mattamayūra lineage in AD 938/39. See "The Śaiva Religion among the Khmers," 396–97.

46. Ali, "Gardens," 243.

47. This *rasa* of "tranquility" (śānta rasa) became the root of intensive philosophical inquiry among medieval Śaiva theologians. For an overview, see Edwin Gerow, "Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics as a Speculative Paradigm," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 2 (April 1, 1994): 186–208; and Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation,* 27–28.

48. On Śiva's relationship with Kāmadeva, see Wendy Doniger, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Siva* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973); and Thomas E. Donaldson, *Kamadeva's Pleasure Garden: Orissa* (New Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 1987).

49. Granoff, "Heaven on Earth."

50. Ranod inscription, verses 49, 51.

51. See, for example, Donaldson, "Bhikṣāṭanamūrti Images from Orissa."

52. Richard H. Davis has written of the experience by audiences viewing icons as a form of "devotional aesthetics" in "Devotional Aesthetics and Temple Icons," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Mumbai* 79 (2004): 45–62. See also Phyllis Granoff, "Halāyudha's Prism: The Experience of

Religion in Medieval Hymns and Stories," in Desai and Mason, *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers,* 67–93. Two discussions of the experience and aesthetics of ritual and devotion in other Indic contexts that I found useful include Pika Ghosh, "Narrating Kṛṣṇa's Biography: Temple Imagery, Oral Performance, and Vaiṣṇava Mission in Seventeenth-Century Bengal," *Artibus Asiae* 65, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 39–85; and Packert, *The Art of Loving Krishna.*

53. For more on pūjā and darśana in South Asia, see Diana Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*, 3rd ed. (Chambersburg, Pa.: Anima, 1981; reprint, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 59-63; Gudrun Bühnemann, *Pūjā: A Study in Smārta Ritual* (Vienna: Institut für Indologie der Universität Wien, 1988); Joanna Waghorne, "Dressing the Body of God: South Indian Bronze Sculpture in Its Temple Setting," *Asian Art* 5, no. 3 (1992): 9–33; and Joanne Punzo Waghorne and Norman Cutler, eds., *Gods of Flesh, Gods of Stone: The Embodiment of Divinity in India* (Chambersburg, Pa.: Anima, 1985).

54. Prescriptions regarding orientation at monastic sites are rare and often relatively vague. A notable exception can be found in the *Mayamatam*, which dictates that the monastery of the guru (*guru-maṭha*) should be situated in the south or the east direction (*Mayamatam* 23.96–97a). This compares well with the slightly later *Aparājitapṛcchā* of western India, which recommends that the monastery be built south of the temple and accompanied by beautiful gardens (85.6–7). On the date of the *Aparājitapṛcchā* and its relationship to earlier texts, see Dhaky, "Influence," 226–34.

55. Translated by Hans Bakker in "At the Right Side of the Teacher: Imagination, Imagery, and Image in Vedic and Śaiva Initiation," in *Images in Asian Religions: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Phyllis Granoff (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 125.

56. This is true not merely for initiation, but also for many daily rites. See Brunner-Lachaux, *Mṛgendrāgama,* 170–78.

57. Bakker, "At the Right Side," 123, as quoted from Jan Gonda, "Dīkṣā," 385.

58. For example, see Hudson, "Early Evidence of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama,*" 138–39; and R. Nagaswamy, *Art and Religion of the Bhairavas: Illumined by Two Rare Sanskrit Texts Sarva-siddhānta-vivēka and Jñāna-siddhi* (Madras: Tamil Arts Academy, 2006), 142.

59. See *Kāmikāgama* 1a. 14–27. For a Sanskrit edition, see C. Svāmināthaśivācārya, ed., *Kāmikāgamaḥ* (Madras: Dakṣiṇabhāratārcakasanghaḥ, 1975–88). A translation is available in an appendix of Richard H. Davis's dissertation, "Ritual in an Oscillating Universe" (PhD, University of Chicago, 1986).

60. On portraiture in medieval India, see Vincent Lefèvre, *Portraiture in Early India: Between Transience and Eternity* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Padma Kaimal, "The Problem of Portraiture in South India, Circa 870–970 AD," *Artibus Asiae* 59, no. 1/2 (January 1, 1999): 59–133; and "The Problem of Portraiture in South India, Circa 970–1000 AD," *Artibus Asiae* 60, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 139–79. For an example of a lineage set found elsewhere on the subcontinent, see Françoise L'Hernault, *Darasuram: Epigraphical study, étude architecturale, étude iconographique* (École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1987).

61. The trinity on the main lintel includes Viṣṇu at the center of the lintel, flanked on either side by Brahmā and Śiva, who is here accompanied by his wife, Pārvatī. While the presence of Viṣṇu at the center is often seen as a Vaiṣṇava marker in later centuries, Garuḍārūḍha Viṣṇu was the standard figure found in the center of the door lintel of temples of both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava affiliations in the eighth and ninth centuries. For comparisons, see the Cāmuṇḍā temple at Mahuā, the Śiva temple near Bhīmagajā at Pañhārī, the Jarai-kā-maṭh at Barwāsāgar, and the Śiva temple accompanying the monastery at Terāhī (*EITA* 2, pt. 2, pls. 118, 132; and Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period,* pl. 116). At earlier sites, such as Naresar and Amrol, Garuḍa appears alone in the central position (lalāṭabimba) (*EITA* 2, pt. 2, pls. 7, 8, 13). The power of Śiva's dance has been eloquently assessed and reassessed on numerous occasions.

In South Indian contexts, dancing Śiva came to signify the act of granting grace, or liberation through the destruction of ignorance, personified as a demon, in the famous Nataraja images from the Chola period.

See Coomaraswamy, *Dance of Śiva,* 56–66; Kramrisch, *Presence of Siva,* 439–42; and Padma Kaimal, "Shiva Nataraja: Shifting Meanings of an Icon," *Art Bulletin* 81, no. 3 (1999): 390–419; Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 43; and Prentiss, "Tamil Lineage," 244–45.

62. The khaṭvāṅga in Śiva's upper left hand is an iconographic feature that distinguishes this version from the more famous Nataraja of southern India. The iconography of Naṭeśa, both with and without a khaṭvāṅga, across northern India has not yet been adequately examined. Naṭeśa appears as a bhadra (central niche) image as early as the eighth century in Menāl, Rajasthan; see Michael Meister, "Style and Idiom in the Art of Uparamala," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993): 345–46, figs. 3–4.

63. Ranod inscription, verse 3.

64. Translated by Davis, "Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," 140, verse 3. See also Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* no. 44, 202.

65. Kapila Vatsyayan, *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts* (New Delhi: Sangeet Natak Akademi, 1968), 270. The association of the peacock with the tāṇḍava dance was not isolated to Śaiva contexts. For example, in his sequel to the *Ramayana,* the *Uttararamacharita* ("The Last Act of Rama"), Bhavabhūti describes the peacock as "calling to his mate from high in the *kadamba* tree, like a jeweled crest, with his soft tail feathers just now fanning out at the end of his festive, incomparable *tandava* dance" (Act 3, verse 19; 3.105); see Bhavabhūti, *Rama's Last Act,* trans. Sheldon I. Pollock (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 194–95.

66. This was certainly the case for their contemporaries in southern India, at the famous temple at Chidambaram, where the worship of Śiva in his form as cosmic dancer is often believed by scholars today to have originally begun. See Kaimal, "Shiva Nataraja"; Paul Younger, *The Home of Dancing Śivaṇ: The Traditions of the Hindu Temple in Citamparam* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 1995); and Vivek Nanda, George Michell, and Bharath Ramamrutham, eds., *Chidambaram: Home of Nataraja* (Mumbai: Marg, 2004). Karen Pechilis Prentiss also recounts a telling in a Tamil Śaiva Siddhānta text, in which the brāhmaṇa priests employed at the temple traced their origin back to the moment of, and claimed to have been witnesses to, the powerful tāṇḍava dance; see *Embodiment of Bhakti,* 138–39.

67. Fuller, *The Renewal of the Priesthood*, 82. Here, Fuller is quoting loosely from Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* 1:xxxviii, 130n3. See also Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 42–82. The discussion of the topography of the Śaiva Siddhānta temple is particularly useful here (*Ritual in an Oscillating Universe,* 61–64). Also significant are Devangana Desai's recent arguments for understanding Khajurāho as a Śaiva Siddhānta ritual site (*Religious Imagery,* 57–60, 149–74).

68. The redirection of the point of entry from the central axis of the original buildings at Terāhī and Ranod may seem out of order with the regularity expected within a plan. However, it is possible that it may have been in keeping with textual prescriptions against installing an axial door in a house built for brāhmaṇas or any member of the twice-born castes, which presumably, if in effect here, would have extended also to holy men and sages. See *Mayamatam,* chap. 26, verse 199. It may be significant that the text, which is dated to approximately the same period as the addition of the enclosure wall (prākāra), makes note that this rule does not apply to heterodox sages, by which is usually meant Buddhist or Jains.

69. Glenn E. Yocum, "A Non-Brāhmaṇ Tamil Shaiva Mutt: A Field Study of the Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam," in *Monastic Life in the Christian and Hindu Traditions,* ed. Austin Creel and Vasudha Narayanan (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 250–52.

70. Iconographically, he is very similar to the figure at Surwāyā; however, stylistically, he is in keeping with a later date. His body is more fully rounded, and the method of framing is quite different. Whereas the figure at Surwāyā is reminiscent of the kind of niches that were used on eighth- and ninth-century temples, the figure at Surwāyā is much more in keeping with the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

71. The remainder of the program is filled out by the guardians of the directions (dikpālas), who occupy the eight corners of the main shrine (karṇas). The threshold, or point of junction (*kapilī*), between the front portico and sanctum contains images of powerful Śaiva goddesses, including the goddess Durgā accompanied by a lion in the north. See Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period,* 123; and *EITA* 2, pt. 2, pl. 72. Unfortunately, the female figure on the south kapilī is too disfigured to identify clearly. The positioning of goddesses on the kapilī of the temple wall marks a shift from the eighth century, when the kapilī remained reserved for images of directional guardians (dikpālas). Here they are found, hidden by the recess between the karṇa and kapilī, in the position that is equivalent to the karṇa of the west side of the sanctum wall. For two essays that provide a good sense of the logic underlying temple programs in northern India, see Mason, "A Sense of Time," 116–38; and Mason, "Reintegrating the Cosmos."

72. From this vantage point, his identity as a son of Śiva may have been particularly important, as all members of the monastic community would have undertaken a level of special initiation (*viśeṣadīkṣā*) that would have ontologically reconstituted them too as "sons of Śiva" (Śiva-putrakas). See, for example, Davis, "Ritual in an Oscillating Universe," 91.

73. See, for example, Gülru Necipoğlu, "Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (January 1, 1993): 303–342; Mary Beth Heston, "The Nexus of Divine and Earthly Rule: Padmanābhapuram Palace and Traditions of Architecture and Kingship in South Asia," *Ars Orientalis* 26 (January 1, 1996): 81–106; and Catherine B. Asher, "Sub-Imperial Palaces: Power and Authority in Mughal India," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (January 1, 1993): 281–302.

74. On the notion of honoring the guru as god, see Padoux, "Tantric Guru."

75. Willis, *Archaeology of Hindu Ritual,* 134, 136–37.

76. Ganesan, *Two Śaiva Teachers,* 90–91.

77. The *Somaśambhupaddhati* recommends that the guru should be worshipped after the worship of the manuscripts (constituting the guru's body of accumulated knowledge) is complete. See Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati,* 82, verses 83b–84a. It should be noted that the guru could also be worshipped mentally, in the event that he was not present.

78. Yocum, "Non-Brāhmaṇ," 252–55. See also K. I. Koppedrayer, "Putting the Picture Together: Āṭi Amāvācai at Dharmapuram," *East and West* 49, no. 1/4 (December 1, 1999): 195–216.

79. Daniel Gold, *The Lord as Guru: Hindu Saints in the North Indian Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 96–97.

80. See Miller and Wertz, *Hindu Monastic Life,* 12–17, 130–31, 134–35. For a general but useful account of the divine status of gurus as "god-men" in modern Hindu traditions, see C. J. Fuller, *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 174–81.

81. Ibid., 166–69.

82. On sarvatobhadra temples, see Kramrisch, *Hindu Temple,* 2:418–24. See also Michael W. Meister, "Mountain Temples and Temple-Mountains: Masrur," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 65, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 26–49; and Inden, "Imperial Purāṇas." For a more technical analysis of textual prescriptions, see A. Lubotsky, "The 'Sarvatobhadra' Temple of the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa and the Viṣṇu Temple at Deogarh," in *Ritual, State, and History in South Asia: Essays in Honour of J. C. Heesterman,* ed. A. W. van den Hoek, D. H. A. Kolff, and M. S. Oort (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

83. A precedent for attaching this kind of miniature sarvotobhadra to a Śiva shrine can be seen at the site of Kuchdon (*EITA* 2, pt. 1, 153–55, pl. 303–308).

84. For additional comparable śikṣādāna scenes, see Thomas Donaldson, *Hindu Temple Art of Orissa,* 3 vols. (Leiden:

Brill, 1987), 3:1170–1174; and Sears, "Encountering Ascetics."

85. On Ajanta, see Walter M. Spink, *Ajanta: History and Development,* vol. 4, *Painting, Sculpture, Architecture Year by Year* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). On Sanchi, see John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, *Monuments of Sanchi,* 3 vols. (London: Probsthain, 1940), pl. 116.

86. It may be useful to note that Buddhists were seen as competitors for royal resources by the Mattamayūras. Verses 36 and 39 of the Ranod inscription make strong statements about the ability of Mattamayūra gurus to master and surpass the teachings of a variety of brāhmaṇical, Buddhist, and Jain sages. See Kielhorn, "Stone Inscription from Ranod"; and Sears, "Housing," 228. Similarly, Buddhists adopted brāhmaṇical ritual practices and were known to perform pūjā and darśana of Buddha images. See Luis O. Gomez, "A Mahayana Liturgy," in *Buddhism in Practice,* ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 186.

CHAPTER 5. CONSTRUCTING THE GURU

1. The vast majority of the inscriptional material pertaining to the Mattamayūras in the Kalachuri kingdom was published by Mirashi in *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era.* For the archaeological accounting of Kalachuri sites, see Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri.* On the recent findings at Chunari, see Singh, "Saiva Monastic Complex," 47–52.

2. Gurgī inscription, verses 6–7.

3. Bilhāri inscription, verses 43–44; Chandrehe inscription, verse 5.

4. The Kalachuris themselves consisted of multiple branches of royal families, with the most powerful being the kings ruling from the capital at Tripurī. This history has been treated in greater detail elsewhere. Key sources include Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* lxvii–lxxxiii; Sharma, *Kalachuris and Their Times;* and Misra, *Sculptures,* 1–33. For more on the role of religion in the Kalachuri state, see Chattopadhyaya, "Religion in a Royal Court," in *Making of Early Medieval India;* and Chakravarty-Kaul, *Religious Life.* It was not uncommon for queens to act as patrons of temples. For further examples of female patronage in early medieval India, see Carol Bolon, "Two Chalukya Queens and Their Commemorative Temples—Eighth-Century Pattadakal," in *Royal Patrons and Great Temple Art,* ed. Vidya Dehejia (Mumbai: Marg, 1988), 61–76; Dehejia, *Art of the Imperial Cholas,* chap. 1; and Padma Kaimal, "Early Cōḻa Kings and 'Early Cōḻa Temples': Art and the Evolution of Kingship," *Artibus Asiae* 56, no. 1/2 (January 1, 1996): 33–66.

5. *CASIR* (1883–84 and 1884–85): 149–54. H. B. W. Garrick, who got to Gurgī a few years before Cunningham, records also four *baolis,* one tank, and four gateways, as well as a spot that once supported a large pillar. See *CASIR* (1881–82): 85–90. For more on the remains at Gurgī and Bilhāri, see Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 41–47; and *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 53–54.

6. The Umā-Maheśvara, which is quite large at 13 by 5.4 feet (4 by 1.6 meters), is currently housed in a park in Rewa. In addition, both Cunningham and Garrick noted a large sculpture of Śiva and Durgā, which is now in the Baghela Museum in Rewa. When conducting fieldwork at the site, I noted additional fragments of sculptures and other architectural carvings scattered around the site, built into the walls of modern shrines and housed in the Archaeological Museum at Rewa, which further attest to the significant artistic production and cultic diversity at Gurgī. A photograph by Deen Dayal, taken in 1882, can be located in the British Library, Shelfmark (Photo 2 Part/Vol. 4, Print No. 21).

7. Bilhāri inscription, verses 40–42.

8. Bilhāri inscription, verses 43–45. For the maintenance of the temple, Nohalā granted the villages of Dhaṅgaṭapāṭaka, Poṇḍī, Nāgabala, Khailapāṭaka, Vīḍā, Sajjāhalī, and Goṣṭhapālī. To Īśvaraśiva, she gifted the villages of Nipānīya and Ambipāṭaka. Unfortunately, the find-spot of the inscription was never recorded. On the dating of the Kāmakandalā temple, see *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 54.

9. *CASIR* (1873–74 and 1874–75): 104.

10. For more on the remains at Bilhāri, see Ali, *Art and Architecture,* 80; and Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 46–47.

11. Kielhorn, "Bilhari Stone Inscription," 207.

12. Bilhāri inscription, verses 46–58, esp. 57–58; quote from verse 58. Whether or not these two monasteries, known as Nauhleśvara and Vaidyanātha, were one and the same is not known. The name "Nauhleśvara" seems to refer to the temple that Nohalā-devi built and to which the monastery was attached. R. D. Banerji notably identified Vaidyanātha with the site of Baijnath, which contains the remains of an extensive temple complex (*Haihayas of Tripuri,* 61). It is also possible that King Lakṣmaṇarāja II built a second, grander monastery at Bilhāri, in which he installed a guru more directly connected to the Mattamayūras. Alexis Sanderson notes that such practices of naming after the patron were done as a way of simplifying legal transactions. He notes: "The deity became individualized for legal purposes (*vyavahārārtham*) by the prefixing of the name of the donor to–īśvara . . . thus allowing it to be treated in law as the owner of the benefactions in the form of land-revenue and other valuables that would sustain the cult." See Sanderson, "Śaiva Exegesis," 238–39.

13. The fact that taxes on goods were to be paid in coins, rather than in a share of the goods, is particularly interesting in light of attempts in the 1990s to refute the prevailing notion that this period witnessed a decline in a monetary economy. For more on the debate, see J. S. Deyell, *Living without Silver: The Monetary History of Early Medieval North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

14. Bilhāri inscription, verses 79–81, 84, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 223.

15. Gurgī inscription, verses 35–43, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 233.

16. See V. V. Mirashi, "The Banaras Plates of Karna, dated to K 793 (AD 1041)," in *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 236–50.

17. Gurgī inscription, verses 3–4, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 231.

18. *CASIR* (1874–75 and 1875–76): 9–10, pl. 3.

19. Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* pls. I–IV, LIV. Banerji's 1931 report acts as a compilation of earlier reports on the site filed by himself and by his predecessors. See *ASIAR* (1920–21): 31–32; and *ASIPRWC* (1906–1907): 13; *ASIPRWC* (1918–19): 11, 16; and *ASIPRWC* (1920–21), 82–83. The most obvious problem with Banerji's published plan is that it incorrectly marks the orientation of the monastery as facing west rather than north. This is likely an error that was a result of the fact that the monastery was published in conjunction with a plan of a Śiva temple at another site, at Gurgī-Masaon, that is oriented correctly on the page. Placed side by side, the two ground plans utilize different scales and orientations; however, while the scales are separately indicated, the orientation is not. Less immediately obvious discrepancies are to be found in the placement of rooms in the southern and eastern wings of the monastery. The arrangement of the rooms in the southern wing, in particular, are completely wrong; it seems as if they represent a conflation of the upper and lower story rooms, particularly toward the center. By contrast, Banerji's written discussion of the southern wing is accurate (*Haihayas of Tripuri,* 39). Other publications that build from Banerji's discussion of Chandrehe include Sharma, *Kalachuris and Their Times,* 261, fig. 5; Rahman Ali, *Art and Architecture of the Kalacuris* (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1980), 34–40, figs. 2 and 3; R. N. Mishra, *Sculptures of Ḍāhala and Dakshiṇa Kosala and Their Background* (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1987), 45, 62n2, fig. 1; Minoti Chakravarty-Kaul, *Religious Life in the Kalachuri Empire* (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1999); and Amrendra Kumar Singh, *Temples of the Kalachuri Period* (Delhi: Pratibha Prakashan, 2002), 57–59. It should be noted that Donald Stadtner began a more careful study of this monastery a few decades ago, but he never completed the project. His preliminary observations and ideas were published in a University of Texas, Austin, report as "A Central Indian Monastery," *Discovery: Research and Scholarship at the University of Texas at Austin* 4, no. 2 (n.d.): 16–19.

20. Chandrehe inscription, verse 7, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 202. The establishment of this retreat is also noted in the Gurgī inscription, verse 13.

21. The Banas that is a tributary of the Son should not to be confused with the larger Banas River that flows through western India. Banerji's 1920–21 report mentions archaeological material at the confluence (*ASIPRWC* [1920–21]: 82) that was further recorded in 1955 by Mirashi, who described the remains as an "ashrama at the foot of the Bhramara hill, which is now in ruins, is still called Bhramarsen" (Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 199). I have additionally noted the presence of sculptural remains and foundation markings in and around two small modern temples situated on either side of the confluence in "Constructing the Guru: Ritual Authority and Architectural Space in Medieval India," *The Art Bulletin* 40, no. 1 (March 2008): 7–31. The pilgrim's record is noted in *ASIAR* (1920–21): 31.

22. Chandrehe inscription, verses 7–14; and Gurgī inscription, verses 13–14.

23. Gurgī inscription, verses 11–12; Misra, *Sculptures,* 26.

24. Gurgī inscription, verse 14.

25. Gurgī inscription, verse 13. Technically, the verse makes reference to the yogin's performance of vows, which amounts to the performance of the daily rites, which they have vowed to uphold.

26. Amarkantak, also known as Amarkaṇṭaka, is a well-documented tīrtha, famous as the source of both the Narmadā and Son rivers. In Kālidāsa's fifth-century play, *Meghadūta,* Amrakuta (that is, Amarkantak) was among the important places that the cloud-messenger is instructed to visit on his way to Mount Kailāśa. See Kālidāsa, *Meghadūta,* trans. Franklin Edgerton and Eleanor Edgerton (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), 19–22. For more on pilgrimage sites, see Amar Nath Khanna, *Pilgrim Shrines of India* (New Delhi: Aryan Books, 2003), no. 43.

27. The Son River ran toward the Ganges, then ran parallel to the south of the larger river past Vārāṇasī, before finally coming to a confluence near ancient Pāṭaliputra, or Patna.

28. This was a very common feature of Śiva temples, particularly those associated with ascetic orders. Good comparisons can be seen as early as the eighth century at sites such as Batesar and Naresar.

29. The rarity of this circular plan has been noted also by other scholars, including Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 33–35, 44–45; and Ali, *Art and Architecture,* 27–29. The closest comparisons can be drawn with two tenth-century temples from the site of Kurārī, not far from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh (*EITA* 2, pt. 3, 87–89, pls. 255–58). Although the articulation of the exterior of these temples is similar to that of Chandrehe and Masāon, their garbha-gṛhas remained square. It may be that their circular plan represented a variation on experiments in stellate plans seen in Dakṣiṇa Kosala and described in Donald M. Stadtner, "Ancient Kosala and the Stellate Plan," in *Kalādarśana: American Studies in the Art of India,* ed. Joanna Williams (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 137–46. The manner of adorning the śukanāsa with diamond-lotuses appears to have been a popular innovation. It survives also in the eleventh-century Kalachuri temples at Lilaha and Amarkantak. See Singh, *Temples of the Kalachuri Period,* pls. 67, 68, 75, 79. For scale drawings of the two temple plans, see *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 42 and 44. For more on the temple at Gurgī-Masaon, see *EITA,* 2, pt. 3, 43–44, pls. 100, 106.

30. Chandrehe inscription, verses 16–17, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203–204.

31. Chandrehe inscription, verse 13, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203. In commenting on this verse, Mirashi suggested that it implies the knowledge of making roads by the process of macadamizing, or by the act of laying down layers of small pieces of broken stone (ibid., n6).

32. Chandrehe inscription, verses 4, 5, 12.

33. On the administration of Kalachuri territories and land grants, see Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* cxxxiii–cxlv; and Sharma, *Kalachuris and Their Times,* 140–44.

34. The utility of wells, tanks, and other devices for artificial irrigation for the processes of state formation has been noted by Chattopadhyaya, "Irrigation in Early Medieval Rajasthan," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16, no. 2/3 (December 1, 1973): 298–316.

35. See, for example, Meister, "Construction and Conception," 409–418.

36. The power of Śiva's dance has been eloquently assessed and reassessed on numerous occasions. See Coomaraswamy, *Dance of Śiva,* 56–66; Kramrisch, *Presence of Siva,* 439–42; and Kaimal, "Shiva Nataraja." See also Chapter 4, n61.

37. For comparisons within Kalachuri territory, see Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* pl. XII, pl. XXXIVb; Ali, *Art and Architecture,* 109, pl. 8; and Misra, *Sculptures,* 54, 72, 82, 97, 104, 108–110, 115, 119; pls. IVb, IVc, Vb, XXVIIa, XXVIIIa, XXXIVa.

38. For example, see Misra, *Sculptures,* 79, 92.

39. Chandrehe inscription, verse 8, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 202.

40. Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 40.

41. Ibid., 37, 40.

42. *ASIAR* (1920–21): 31–32. The idea that these cells were used as shrine chambers has become a standard observation in the few accounts that have circulated; the authoritative entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture,* for example, simply states that "at least four of these cells were used as shrines with modestly carved doorways befitting the residential complex for the ascetics"; *EITA* 2, pt., 3, 54.

43. The entranceway has been filled with mud in recent years. A photograph and description published by Banerji provides a clearer image (*Haihayas of Tripuri,* pl. 3a).

44. The presence of this additional room, which was likely the sanctum, has never yet been noted, due to its absence from the plan published by Banerji in 1931, in the *Haihayas of Tripuri.* Subsequent conservation work at the site has revealed the foundations for an additional room as well as the fragments of a wall that once would have enclosed it.

45. Banerji also thought this room might have functioned as a storage room; see Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 39.

46. Remnants of what may have been a figure of a second disciple were barely visible to the guru's left.

47. The placement of small rooms along an open veranda seems particularly notable in relationship to the form of the original buildings at Ranod and Surwāyā.

48. See, for example, Yocum, "Non-Brāhmaṇ," 250–52; and Koppedrayer, "Putting the Picture Together," esp. 196–97.

49. For more on icons of divinized gurus, see Donaldson, "Lakulīśa to Rājaguru"; C. Margabandhu and P. K. Trivedi, "Sculptural Representations of Saiva Teachers from Southern Rajasthan," in *Rupanjali: In Memory of O.C. Gangoly,* ed. Kalyan Kumar Ganguli and S. S. Biswas (Calcutta: C. O. C. Gangoly Memorial Society, 1986); Devangana Desai, "A Rare Sculpture of the Sage Agastya at Khajuraho," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 74 (2000): 66–70; Debala Mitra, "Lakulisha and Early Shaiva Temples in Orissa," in *Discourses on Shiva: Proceedings of a Symposium on the Nature of Religious Imagery,* ed. Michael W. Meister (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984); U. P. Shah, "Lakulīśa: Śaivite Saint," in the same volume; M. C. Chaubey, *Lakulisha in Indian Art and Culture* (Delhi: Sharada, 1997); Gouriswar Bhattacharya, "Inscribed Image of a Śaivācārya from Bengal," in *South Asian Archaeology 1993,* ed. Asko Parpola and Petteri Koskikallio (Helskinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1994), 93–99, and "A New Śaivācārya with Disciples," *Kalyan Bharati* 6 (2002): 5–14.

50. Chandrehe inscription, verse 11, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203.

51. This was mentioned with interest in early Archaeological Survey of India reports. See *CASIR* (1874–75 and 1875–76): 9–10.

52. It is useful to remember that monasteries were repositories of wealth, and the Mattamayūras had the ability to collect revenue on the produce from agrarian villages and market goods. It would not be unprecedented to find secret chambers intended to protect material possessions from plunder by bandits or enemy troops. Until the site is further excavated, however, there is no way to determine the depth of this underground room or what its purpose might have been. Maṭhas may also have acquired wealth through their participation in larger trade networks. See, for example, Chakravarti, "Coastal Trade and Voyages in Konkan."

53. Banerji originally suggested that this second story functioned as "either a library or school room, for the training of novices," because "as at the present day, chambers built over chambers, which are in use as shrines, cannot be used as living rooms" (Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripuri,* 40). Banerji does not cite his evidence for this latter assumption, and I have been unable to find evidence that corroborates it.

54. Much of the second story was destroyed even by the time that it was first inspected by J. D. Beglar in 1874; see *ASIAR* (1874–76): 9.

55. The doorway was fitted with a large square socket that could accommodate a sliding bolt. For more on doorways, see the Epilogue.

56. The full extent of religious patronage is covered in Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* cxlv–clxiii; and Sharma, *Kalachuris and Their Times,* 214–55. See also Dehejia, "Kalachuri Monarch."

57. The monastery at Chunari was discovered and published within the last decade in Singh, "Saiva Monastic Complex," 67–71. It may be notable that Chunari is not far from Deour Kothar, an earlier Buddhist monastic site that has only been recently discovered and excavated under the supervision of P. K. Misra. See also Singh, *Temples of the Kalachuri Period,* 40, 67–68, pls. 46–50, 82–83.

58. The monastery at Raneh was first noticed in 1904 and has been the site of ongoing activity since 2002. It was only in 1995–96 that the monastery was recognized as being part of a larger complex, during the process of clearing debris from the plan. See *ASIPREC* (1904): 46–47; and *IAR* (1995–96): 129, 158. See also Kirit K. Shah, *Ancient Bundelkhand: Religious History in Socio-Economic Perspective* (Delhi: Gian, 1988), 62.

59. *ASIPREC* (1904): 46–47.

60. The monastery at Koḍal has been briefly noted in *IAR* (1985–86): 160; *IAR* (1986–87): 145; and *IAR* (1987–88): 179; Om Prakash Misra, *Archaeological Excavations in Central India: Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh* (New Delhi: Mittal, 2003); and Shah, *Ancient Bundelkhand,* 60–61. The temple is treated briefly by Krishna Deva in *EITA* 2, pt. 3, 55–56.

61. Bilhāri inscription, verse 58. On the temple at Nohṭā, see *EITA* 3, pt. 3, 44–48.

62. It is also notable that Naṭeśa appears in one of the bhadras of the temple wall, which puts this temple in line not only with temples at other Kalachuri Śaiva sites (for example, Nohṭā), but also with Kadwāhā, as discussed in Chapter 4. See also Sears, "Constructing the Guru," 14–15.

63. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* clvi. See also Pantulu, "Malkāpuram Stone-Pillar Inscription of Rudradeva (Rudramba)."

64. Jabalpur inscription, verse 44.

65. Ibid., verses 36–37.

66. Sanderson, "Religion and the State," 229–300, and "Ritual for Oneself," 13–14.

67. Kings were known to receive periodic blessings from Śaiva officiants that could bring destruction on their enemies, protect the welfare and unity of their kingdom, and ensure victory in battle. And, indeed, the very act of initiation within the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition, in the case of royalty, was enough, as Richard Davis has pointed out ("Praises of the Drunken Peacocks," 136) to bring them success in all of their worldly endeavors. Sanderson ("Ritual for Oneself," 14–15) interprets the Jabalpur inscription as indicating that the sage Kīrtiśiva acted as a military commander, which seems to be an overstatement. Although he does not cite his specific source, it seems that he is referring to verse 23, which describes Kīrtiśiva as having "reduced to ashes the cities of his enemies." While this may be taken as an act of military prowess, it seems more likely to be a generic reference to his status as being like another Śiva, here noted in his form as conqueror of the three cities, a trope that was not uncommon in Mattamayūra inscriptions. It seems more likely that this is simply a reference to Kīrtiśiva's ability to invest his patron king's instruments of war with sacred power.

68. See Sanderson, "Religion and the State," 246–70. Since it is clear from both inscriptions that the initiating Mattamayūra gurus presumably remained in residence at their monastery rather than relocating to the royal household, it is unclear whether they functioned in quite this way, at least in the tenth century.

69. Jabalpur stone inscription, verse 46. It is worth noting that, in addition to honoring his own guru, Vimalaśiva, through this offering, the king was also honoring his father's guru, Kīrtiśiva, after whom the temple was named.

70. Bilhāri inscription 62, translated by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 221.

71. See, for example, the Jabalpur plates of Jayasiṁha, published by Mirashi in *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 324–31.

72. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* cviii, 370.

73. Desai, *Religious Imagery*. In the case of the Chandellas, we find inscriptions containing names of rājagurus, and mahā-rājagurus, both at Khajurāho and at the royal capital at Kālañjar, and a compelling case has made for the active participation of both Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra and Śaiva Siddhāntha preceptors, or ācāryas, in the construction of Khajurāho's temples. See Trivedi, *Inscriptions,* 53–60, 146.

74. One inscription records a gift of a field in the village Kunde—for the maintenance of ascetics living in the Bhaiyapeśvara temple—to the Mattamayūra ascetic Jñanaśiva given by the Śilāhāra king Chittarāja. Others indicate that these Mattamayūras functioned as rājagurus to the Śilāhāras, and others still record repairs to temples and maṭhas and further gifts of land and wealth. See Kielhorn, "Kharepatan Plates," 292–302.

75. An inscription from Ranipur Jharial records the founder of the monastery at the site as a sage named Gaganaśiva, who is described as "an immigrant from the glorious Uttara-Terambagṛha," a term that may refer to Terāhī. See Chapters 2 and 4. The inscription in question was edited by Chhabra, "Ranipur Jharial Inscriptions," 239–45.

76. Pantulu, "Malkāpuram Stone-Pillar Inscription of Rudradeva (Rudramba)." The identification as Bherāghāṭ can be traced back to Sharma, *Temple of Chaunsaṭha-Yoginī,* and has been repeated as recently as 2003, by David Gordon White, *Kiss of the Yoginī: "Tantric Sex" in Its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 136–37. For the possible identification of Gurgī, see Sanderson, "Śaiva Age," 264n620.

77. Talbot, "Golakī Maṭha Inscriptions."

78. B. G. L. Swamy, "The Golakī School of Śaivism in the Tamil Country," *Journal of Indian History* 53 (1975): 167–209.

79. The most famous case here would be Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā*.

80. Chandrehe inscription, verses 11–12, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203.

81. Chandrehe inscription, verse 10, translation by Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era,* 203. Mirashi notes an elaborate act of śleṣa in this inscription, through which the ritual actions and qualities of the sage are likened to Kārttikeya's actions as described in the *Purāṇas*.

82. This is to be noted in contrast to the Kāpālikas, who are critiqued in sources commissioned within the Kalachuri court. See Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, "Religion in a Royal Court," in *Making of Early Medieval India*.

EPILOGUE

1. This inscription is mentioned in Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra,* 53; Singh, "Inscriptions from Kadwaha," 230–31; and *GAR* (1941): 53.

2. I have made this argument in Sears, "Fortified Maṭhas," 25–26. See also Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354,* trans. and ed. H. A. R. Gibb (1929; reprint, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), 224–26; and Samuel Lee, trans. and ed., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta in the Near East, Asia and Africa, 1325–1354* (1829; reprint, New York: Dover, 2004), 162.

3. Alka Patel, "The Historiography of Reuse in South Asia," *Archives of Asian Art* 59, no. 1 (2009): 1–5; Julia Hegewald and Subrata K. Mitra, eds., *Re-Use: The Art and Politics of Integration and Anxiety* (New Delhi: Sage, 2012); Richard Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States," in *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia*, ed. David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 246–81; Michael W. Meister, "The 'Two-and-a-Half-Day' Mosque," *Oriental Art* 18, no. 1 (1972): 57–63, and "Crossing Lines: Architecture in Early Islamic South Asia," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (2003): 117–30; and Finbarr Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 4 (December 2002): 641–59.

4. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, *Early Indian Architecture: Palaces* (1931; reprint, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1975), 3.

5. The *Mānasāra*, for example, defines mansions and residences as dwellings "connected to the ground," and palaces, pavilions, council-chambers, halls, water sheds, and theaters as edifices (*harmya*) (chap. 3.3–8). Sites that are quadrangular and elevated toward the south and west are preferable to those accessible from all directions (chap. 4.2–3, 37), and the soil should be examined carefully before anything is built (chap. 5). Measurements should be drawn from the architect's body and laid out carefully using *gnomens*, cords, and pegs (chap. 6). The text itself has separate sections on town planning, the construction of temples, temple courts, and pavilions, as well as on storied mansions (chap. 35), dwellings (chaps. 36–39), and palaces (chap. 40). Similar prescriptions are found in other treatises, the most relevant of which may well be the *Mayamatam*. The most comprehensive treatment of the *Mānasāra* is Prasanna Acharya, *Architecture of Mānasāra*, 5 vols. (London [u. a.]: Oxford University Press, 1927). On the *Mayamatam*, see Dagens, *Mayamatam*.

6. Surwāyā perhaps presents the clearest evidence for reading the ruined rooms, labeled 10 on the plan, as bathing chambers.

7. One sees a similar use of pivot hinges in pueblo architecture, as well as in medieval European fortresses. See, for example, Stephen T. Driscoll, Peter Yeoman, and Jane Clark, *Excavations within Edinburgh Castle in 1988–91* (Edinburgh: Society Antiquaries Scotland, 1997), 159–60.

8. Residues of rust can still be seen in places.

9. On mason's marks, see M. J. Walhouse, "Mason's Marks," *IA* 4 (1875): 302–305; H. Rivett-Carnac, "Mason's Marks from Old Buildings in the North-west Provinces of India," *IA* 7 (1878): 295–98; and H. Sarkar, "Chronological Aspects of Mason's Marks from Nagarjunakonda," *Bharati* 12–14 (1968–71): 226–35.

10. Davis, *Ritual in an Oscillating Universe*, 104.

11. I provided a full assessment of this site in an earlier publication; see Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes," 107–126.

12. Ram Sharma, "Menal Inscription of the Time of Chahamana Prithviraja II, Vikrama 1226," *EI* (1970): 38: 7, 319–22. Other readings of the Sanskrit can be found in Kavi Rāj Shyāmal Das, "The Antiquity, Authenticity and Genuineness of the Epic Called *The Prithī Rāj Rāsā*, and Commonly Ascribed to Chand Bardai," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1886) 55, no. 1: 5–65; and Ratan Lal Mishra, *The Mewar Inscriptions* (Nawalgarh [Jhunjhanu], Rajasthan: Mahamaya Prakashan, 2000), 84–85.

13. The fact that the space directly below was closed off is particularly remarkable; it would have been extremely inauspicious to have a residential space below a space housing a permanent icon.

14. Trivedi, "Surwāyā Stone Inscription," 591–94; Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra*, 14, 18–21, 31; and *GAR* (1939–40): 7.

15. Andre Wink, *Al Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 2, *The Slave Kings and Islamic Conquest in the 11th–13th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 158; Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 144–45; Fussman et al., *Chanderi*, 2:297; and D. S. Sircar, "Inscriptions of the Time of Yajvapala Gopala," *EI* 31 (1955–56): 324. Fussman puts the range of dates for Chanderī's takeover between 1292 and 1305, but an inscription found at Narwar fort records the construction of a well and Śaiva temple during the reign of the Yajvapālas as late as VS 1355 (AD 1298–99). See also Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra*, 21–22, 31. On the Chandella campaign, see *IAR* (1955–56): 30.

16. Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 331–33. See also Oleg Grabar, "Palaces, Citadels and Fortifications," in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*, ed. George Michell (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 70; and Michael Meister, quoting Grabar, in "Crossing Lines," 121. On the use of the ribāṭ as a camp for spiritual warriors and its frequent, yet misleading, translation as a "monastery," see Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 331. On the defensive function of the ribāṭ, see Majid Khaddur, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1955), 81–82. The earliest example found on the Indian subcontinent dates back to the Ghurid expansion in the late twelfth century, when 'Alī b. Karmākh commissioned a ribāṭ in Kabirwala, north of Multan in Pakistan. In her discussion of 'Alī b. Karmākh's ribāṭ, Holly Edwards argues that it may have been built specifically to fulfill the needs of the faithful who had left their homes to take up the cause of *jihad* in the frontier; see Holly Edwards, "The *Ribāṭ* of 'Alā b. Karmàkh," *Iran* 29 (1991): 86–89.

17. This history is compiled from a variety of sources, including inscriptions (Willis, *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra*, 36, 50, 56–57, 63, 93–96, 104) and colonial-era gazetteers (*Imperial Gazetteer of India: Central India*, 140, 181, 271–72; and *Gwalior State Gazetteer* [*The Central India State Gazetteer*], 271–72). For further description of the sacking of Ranod, see Sir John William Kaye and George Bruce Malleson, *Kaye's and Malleson's History*

of the Indian Mutiny of 1857–8 (London: W. H. Allen, 1889), 252–53. Kaye and Malleson record casualties amounting to 150 soldiers, six elephants, and several horses and ponies on the side of the Indian rebel army, and sixteen wounded, one of whom subsequently died, on the British side. A second account indicates that an additional three hundred rebel soldiers were killed in pursuit as they were retreating from Ranod. See Reginald George Burton, *The Revolt in Central India 1857–59* (Simla: Government Monotype Press, 1908), 227–28.

18. *CASIR* (1862–63 and 1864–65): 303–304

19. Ibid., 304.

20. *CASIR* (1874–75 and 1875–76): 9.

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